FEBRUARY 1963

Commentary

MY NEGRO PROBLEM—AND OURS

Norman Podhoretz

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE JEWISH MUSICIAN: Albert Goldman

BOOKS FOR AMERICAN CHILDREN: Jason Epstein

ON BEING A CANDIDATE: H. Stuart Hughes

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Books in Review

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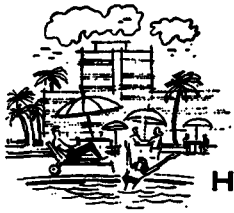

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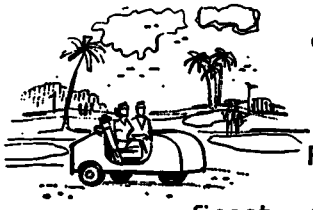

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MY NEGRO PROBLEM—AND OURS

NORMAN PODHORETZ

If we—and . . . I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of the others—do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world.

—James Baldwin

TWO IDEAS puzzled me deeply as a child growing up in Brooklyn during the 1930's in what today would be called an integrated neighborhood. One of them was that all Jews were rich; the other was that all Negroes were persecuted. These ideas had appeared in print; therefore they must be true. My own experience and the evidence of my senses told me they were not true, but that only confirmed what a day-dreaming boy in the provinces—for the lower-class neighborhoods of New York belong as surely to the provinces as any rural town in North Dakota—discovers very early: *his* experience is unreal and the evidence of his senses is not to be trusted. Yet even a boy with a head full of fantasies incongruously synthesized out of Hollywood movies and English novels cannot altogether deny the reality of his own experience—especially when there is so much deprivation in that experience. Nor can he altogether gainsay the evidence of his own senses—especially such evidence of the senses as comes from being repeatedly beaten up, robbed, and in general hated, terrorized, and humiliated.

And so for a long time I was puzzled to think that Jews were supposed to be rich when the only Jews I knew were poor, and that Negroes were supposed to be persecuted when it was the Negroes who were doing the only persecuting I knew about—and doing it, moreover, to *me*. During the early years of the war, when my older sister joined a left-wing youth organization, I remember my astonishment at hearing her passionately denounce my father for thinking that Jews were worse off than Negroes. To me, at the age of twelve, it seemed very clear that Negroes were better off than Jews—indeed, than *all* whites. A city boy's world is contained within three or four square blocks, and in my world it was the whites, the Italians and Jews, who feared the Negroes, not the other way around. The Negroes were tougher than we were, more ruthless, and on the whole they were better athletes. What could it mean, then, to say that they were badly off and that we were more fortunate? Yet my sister's opinions, like print, were sacred, and when she told me about exploitation and economic forces I believed her. I believed her, but I was still afraid of Negroes. And I still hated them with all my heart.

It had not always been so—that much I can recall from early childhood. When did it start, this fear and this hatred? There was a kindergarten in the local public school, and given the character of the

NORMAN PODHORETZ is Editor of COMMENTARY. The views he expresses in this article are strictly his own and are not to be identified either with the magazine or the sponsoring organization.

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neighborhood, at least half of the children in my class must have been Negroes. Yet I have no memory of being aware of color differences at that age, and I know from observing my own children that they attribute no significance to such differences even when they begin noticing them. I think there was a day—first grade? second grade?—when my best friend Carl hit me on the way home from school and announced that he wouldn't play with me any more because I had killed Jesus. When I ran home to my mother crying for an explanation, she told me not to pay any attention to such foolishness, and then in Yiddish she cursed the *goyim* and the *schwartzes,* the *schwartzes* and the *goyim.* Carl, it turned out, was a *schwartze,* and so was added a third to the categories into which people were mysteriously divided.

SOMETIMES I wonder whether this is a true memory at all. It is blazingly vivid, but perhaps it never happened: can anyone really remember back to the age of six? There is no uncertainty in my mind, however, about the years that followed. Carl and I hardly ever spoke, though we met in school every day up through the eighth or ninth grade. There would be embarrassed moments of catching his eye or of his catching mine—for whatever it was that had attracted us to one another as very small children remained alive in spite of the fantastic barrier of hostility that had grown up between us, suddenly and out of nowhere. Nevertheless, friendship would have been impossible, and even if it had been possible, it would have been unthinkable. About that, there was nothing anyone could do by the time we were eight years old.

Item: The orphanage across the street is torn down, a city housing project begins to rise in its place, and on the marvelous vacant lot next to the old orphanage they are building a playground. Much excitement and anticipation as Opening Day draws near. Mayor LaGuardia himself comes to dedicate this great gesture of public benevolence. He speaks of neighborliness and borrowing cups of sugar, and of the playground he says that children of all races, colors, and creeds will learn to live together in harmony. A week later, some of us are swatting flies on the playground's inadequate little ball field. A gang of Negro kids, pretty much our own age, enter from the other side and order us out of the park. We refuse, proudly and indignantly, with superb masculine fervor. There is a fight, they win, and we retreat, half whimpering, half with bravado. My first nauseating experience of cowardice. And my first appalled realization that there are people in the world who do not seem to be afraid of anything, who act as though they have nothing to lose. Thereafter the playground becomes a battleground, sometimes quiet, sometimes the scene of athletic competition between Them and Us. But rocks are thrown as often as baseballs. Gradually we abandon the place and use the streets instead. The streets are safer, though we do not admit this to ourselves. We are not, after all, sissies—that most dreaded epithet of an American boyhood.

Item: I am standing alone in front of the building in which I live. It is late afternoon and getting dark. That day in school the teacher had asked a surly Negro boy named Quentin a question he was unable to answer. As usual I had waved my arm eagerly ("Be a good boy, get good marks, be smart, go to college, become a doctor") and, the right answer bursting from my lips, I was held up lovingly by the teacher as an example to the class. I had seen Quentin's face—a very dark, very cruel, very Oriental-looking face—harden, and there had been enough threat in his eyes to make me run all the way home for fear that he might catch me outside.

Now, standing idly in front of my own house, I see him approaching from the project accompanied by his little brother who is carrying a baseball bat and wearing a grin of malicious anticipation. As in a nightmare, I am trapped. The surround-

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ings are secure and familiar, but terror is suddenly present and there is no one around to help. I am locked to the spot. I will not cry out or run away like a sissy, and I stand there, my heart wild, my throat clogged. He walks up, hurls the familiar epithet ("Hey, mo'f——r"), and to my surprise only pushes me. It is a violent push, but not a punch. A push is not as serious as a punch. Maybe I can still back out without entirely losing my dignity. Maybe I can still say, "Hey, c'mon Quentin, whaddya wanna do *that* for. I dint do nothin' to *you*," and walk away, not too rapidly. Instead, before I can stop myself, I push him back—a token gesture—and I say, "Cut that out, I don't wanna fight, I ain't got nothin' to fight about." As I turn to walk back into the building, the corner of my eye catches the motion of the bat his little brother has handed him. I try to duck, but the bat crashes colored lights into my head.

The next thing I know, my mother and sister are standing over me, both of them hysterical. My sister—she who was later to join the "progressive" youth organization—is shouting for the police and screaming imprecations at those dirty little black bastards. They take me upstairs, the doctor comes, the police come. I tell them that the boy who did it was a stranger, that he had been trying to get money from me. They do not believe me, but I am too scared to give them Quentin's name. When I return to school a few days later, Quentin avoids my eyes. He knows that I have not squealed, and he is ashamed. I try to feel proud, but in my heart I know that it was fear of what his friends might do to me that had kept me silent, and not the code of the street.

Item: There is an athletic meet in which the whole of our junior high school is participating. I am in one of the seventh-grade rapid-advance classes, and "segregation" has now set in with a vengeance. In the last three or four years of the elementary school from which we have just graduated, each grade had been divided into three classes, according to "intelligence." (In the earlier grades the divisions had either been arbitrary or else unrecognized by us as having anything to do with brains.) These divisions by IQ, or however it was arranged, had resulted in a preponderance of Jews in the "1" classes and a corresponding preponderance of Negroes in the "3's," with the Italians split unevenly along the spectrum. At least a few Negroes had always made the "1's," just as there had always been a few Jewish kids among the "3's" and more among the "2's" (where Italians dominated). But the junior high's rapid-advance class of which I am now a member is overwhelmingly Jewish and entirely white—except for a shy lonely Negro girl with light skin and reddish hair.

The athletic meet takes place in a city-owned stadium far from the school. It is an important event to which a whole day is given over. The winners are to get those precious little medallions stamped with the New York City emblem that can be screwed into a belt and that prove the wearer to be a distinguished personage. I am a fast runner, and so I am assigned the position of anchor man on my class's team in the relay race. There are three other seventh-grade teams in the race, two of them all Negro, as ours is all white. One of the all-Negro teams is very tall—their anchor man waiting silently next to me on the line looks years older than I am, and I do not recognize him. He is the first to get the baton and crosses the finishing line in a walk. Our team comes in second, but a few minutes later we are declared the winners, for it has been discovered that the anchor man on the first-place team is not a member of the class. We are awarded the medallions, and the following day our home-room teacher makes a speech about how proud she is of us for being superior athletes as well as superior students. We want to believe that we deserve the praise, but we know that we could not have won even if the other class had not cheated.

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That afternoon, walking home, I am waylaid and surrounded by five Negroes, among whom is the anchor man of the disqualified team. "Gimme my medal, mo'f——r," he grunts. I do not have it with me and I tell him so. "Anyway, it ain't yours," I say foolishly. He calls me a liar on both counts and pushes me up against the wall on which we sometimes play handball. "Gimme my mo'f——n' medal," he says again. I repeat that I have left it home. "Le's search the li'l mo'f——r," one of them suggests, "he prolly got it *hid* in his mo'f——n' *pants*." My panic is now unmanageable. (How many times had I been surrounded like this and asked in soft tones, "Len' me a nickle, boy." How many times had I been called a liar for pleading poverty and pushed around, or searched, or beaten up, unless there happened to be someone in the marauding gang like Carl who liked me across that enormous divide of hatred and who would therefore say, "Aaah, c'mon, le's git someone else, *this* boy ain't got no money on 'im.") I scream at them through tears of rage and self-contempt, "Keep your f——n' filthy lousy black hands offa me! I swear I'll get the cops." This is all they need to hear, and the five of them set upon me. They bang me around, mostly in the stomach and on the arms and shoulders, and when several adults loitering near the candy store down the block notice what is going on and begin to shout, they run off and away.

I do not tell my parents about the incident. My team-mates, who have also been waylaid, each by a gang led by his opposite number from the disqualified team, have had their medallions taken from them, and they never squeal either. For days, I walk home in terror, expecting to be caught again, but nothing happens. The medallion is put away into a drawer, never to be worn by anyone.

OBVIOUSLY experiences like these have always been a common feature of childhood life in working-class and immigrant neighborhoods, and Negroes do not necessarily figure in them. Wherever, and in whatever combination, they have lived together in the cities, kids of different groups have been at war, beating up and being beaten up: micks against kikes against wops against spicks against polacks. And even relatively homogeneous areas have not been spared the warring of the young: one block against another, one gang (called in my day, in a pathetic effort at gentility, an "S.A.C.," or social-athletic club) against another. But the Negro-white conflict had—and no doubt still has—a special intensity and was conducted with a ferocity unmatched by intramural white battling.

In my own neighborhood, a good deal of animosity existed between the Italian kids (most of whose parents were immigrants from Sicily) and the Jewish kids (who came largely from East European immigrant families). Yet everyone had friends, sometimes close friends, in the other "camp," and we often visited one another's strange-smelling houses, if not for meals, then for glasses of milk, and occasionally for some special event like a wedding or a wake. If it happened that we divided into warring factions and did battle, it would invariably be half-hearted and soon patched up. Our parents, to be sure, had nothing to do with one another and were mutually suspicious and hostile. But we, the kids, who all spoke Yiddish or Italian at home, were Americans, or New Yorkers, or Brooklyn boys: we shared a culture, the culture of the street, and at least for a while this culture proved to be more powerful than the opposing cultures of the home.

Why, *why* should it have been so different as between the Negroes and us? How was it borne in upon us so early, white and black alike, that we were enemies beyond any possibility of reconciliation? Why did we hate one another so?

I suppose if I tried, I could answer those questions more or less adequately from the perspective of what I have since

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learned. I could draw upon James Baldwin—what better witness is there?—to describe the sense of entrapment that poisons the soul of the Negro with hatred for the white man whom he knows to be his jailer. On the other side, if I wanted to understand how the white man comes to hate the Negro, I could call upon the psychologists who have spoken of the guilt that white Americans feel toward Negroes and that turns into hatred for lack of acknowledging itself as guilt. These are plausible answers and certainly there is truth in them. Yet when I think back upon my own experience of the Negro and his of me, I find myself troubled and puzzled, much as I was as a child when I heard that all Jews were rich and all Negroes persecuted. How could the Negroes in my neighborhood have regarded the whites across the street and around the corner as jailers? On the whole, the whites were not so poor as the Negroes, but they were quite poor enough, and the years were years of Depression. As for white hatred of the Negro, how could guilt have had anything to do with it? What share had these Italian and Jewish immigrants in the enslavement of the Negro? What share had they—downtrodden people themselves breaking their own necks to eke out a living—in the exploitation of the Negro?

No, I cannot believe that we hated each other back there in Brooklyn because they thought of us as jailers and we felt guilty toward them. But does it matter, given the fact that we all went through an unrepresentative confrontation? I think it matters profoundly, for if we managed the job of hating each other so well without benefit of the aids to hatred that are supposedly at the root of this madness everywhere else, it must mean that the madness is not yet properly understood. I am far from pretending that I understand it, but I would insist that no view of the problem will begin to approach the truth unless it can account for a case like the one I have been trying to describe. Are the elements of any such view available to us?

At least two, I would say, are. One of them is a point we frequently come upon in the work of James Baldwin, and the other is a related point always stressed by psychologists who have studied the mechanisms of prejudice. Baldwin tells us that one of the reasons Negroes hate the white man is that the white man refuses to *look* at him: the Negro knows that in white eyes all Negroes are alike; they are faceless and therefore not altogether human. The psychologists, in their turn, tell us that the white man hates the Negro because he tends to project those wild impulses that he fears in himself onto an alien group which he then punishes with his contempt. What Baldwin does *not* tell us, however, is that the principle of facelessness is a two-way street and can operate in both directions with no difficulty at all. Thus, in my neighborhood in Brooklyn, *I* was as faceless to the Negroes as they were to me, and if they hated me because I never looked at them, I must also have hated them for never looking at *me*. To the Negroes, my white skin was enough to define me as the enemy, and in a war it is only the uniform that counts and not the person.

So with the mechanism of projection that the psychologists talk about: it too works in both directions at once. There is no question that the psychologists are right about what the Negro represents symbolically to the white man. For me as a child the life lived on the other side of the playground and down the block on Ralph Avenue seemed the very embodiment of the values of the street—free, independent, reckless, brave, masculine, erotic. I put the word "erotic" last, though it is usually stressed above all others, because in fact it came last, in consciousness as in importance. What mainly counted for me about Negro kids of my own age was that they were "bad boys." There were plenty of bad boys among the whites—this was, after all, a neighborhood with a long tra-

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dition of crime as a career open to aspiring talents—but the Negroes were *really* bad, bad in a way that beckoned to one, and made one feel inadequate. *We* all went home every day for a lunch of spinach-and-potatoes; *they* roamed around during lunch hour, munching on candy bars. In winter *we* had to wear itchy woolen hats and mittens and cumbersome galoshes; *they* were bare-headed and loose as they pleased. *We* rarely played hookey, or got into serious trouble in school, for all our street-corner bravado; *they* were defiant, forever staying out (to do what delicious things?), forever making disturbances in class and in the halls, forever being sent to the principal and returning uncowed. But most important of all, they were *tough;* beautifully, enviably tough, not giving a damn for anyone or anything. To hell with the teacher, the truant officer, the cop; to hell with the whole of the adult world that held *us* in its grip and that we never had the courage to rebel against except sporadically and in petty ways.

This is what I saw and envied and feared in the Negro: this is what finally made him faceless to me, though some of it, of course, was actually there. (The psychologists also tell us that the alien group which becomes the object of a projection will tend to respond by trying to live up to what is expected of them.) But what, on his side, did the Negro see in me that made me faceless to *him?* Did he envy me my lunches of spinach-and-potatoes and my itchy woolen caps and my prudent behavior in the face of authority, as I envied him his noon-time candy bars and his bare head in winter and his magnificent rebelliousness? Did those lunches and caps spell for him the prospect of power and riches in the future? Did they mean that there were possibilities open to me that were denied to him? Very likely they did. But if so, one also supposes that he feared the impulses within himself toward submission to authority no less powerfully than I feared the impulses in myself toward defiance. If I represented the jailer to him, it was not because I was oppressing him or keeping him down: it was because I symbolized for him the dangerous and probably pointless temptation toward greater repression, just as he symbolized for me the equally perilous tug toward greater freedom. I personally was to be rewarded for this repression with a new and better life in the future, but how many of my friends paid an even higher price and were given only gall in return.

WE HAVE it on the authority of James Baldwin that all Negroes hate whites. I am trying to suggest that on their side all whites—all American whites, that is—are sick in their feelings about Negroes. There are Negroes, no doubt, who would say that Baldwin is wrong, but I suspect them of being less honest than he is, just as I suspect whites of self-deception who tell me they have no special feeling toward Negroes. Special feelings about color are a contagion to which white Americans seem susceptible even when there is nothing in their background to account for the susceptibility. Thus everywhere we look today in the North, we find the curious phenomenon of white middle-class liberals with no previous personal experience of Negroes—people to whom Negroes have always been faceless in virtue rather than faceless in vice—discovering that their abstract commitment to the cause of Negro rights will not stand the test of a direct confrontation. We find such people fleeing in droves to the suburbs as the Negro population in the inner city grows; and when they stay in the city we find them sending their children to private school rather than to the "integrated" public school in the neighborhood. We find them resisting the demand that gerrymandered school districts be re-zoned for the purpose of overcoming de facto segregation; we find them judiciously considering whether the Negroes (for their own good, of course) are not perhaps pushing too hard; we find them clucking their tongues over Negro militancy; we find them speculating on the

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question of whether there may not, after all, be something in the theory that the races are biologically different; we find them saying that it will take a very long time for Negroes to achieve full equality, no matter what anyone does; we find them deploring the rise of black nationalism and expressing the solemn hope that the leaders of the Negro community will discover ways of containing the impatience and incipient violence within the Negro ghettos.*

But that is by no means the whole story; there is also the phenomenon of what Kenneth Rexroth once called "crow-jimism." There are the broken-down white boys like Vivaldo Moore in Baldwin's *Another Country* who go to Harlem in search of sex or simply to brush up against something that looks like primitive vitality, and who are so often punished by the Negroes they meet for crimes that they would have been the last ever to commit and of which they themselves have been as sorry victims as any of the Negroes who take it out on them. There are the writers and intellectuals and artists who romanticize Negroes and pander to them, assuming a guilt that is not properly theirs. And there are all the white liberals who permit Negroes to blackmail them into adopting a double standard of moral judgment, and who lend themselves—again assuming the responsibility for crimes they never committed—to cunning and contemptuous exploitation by Negroes they employ or try to befriend.

AND WHAT about me? What kind of feelings do I have about Negroes today? What happened to me, from Brooklyn, who grew up fearing and envying and hating Negroes? Now that Brooklyn is behind me, do I fear them and envy them and hate them still? The answer is yes, but not in the same proportions and certainly not in the same way. I now live on the upper west side of Manhattan, where there are many Negroes and many Puerto Ricans, and there are nights when I experience the old apprehensiveness again, and there are streets that I avoid when I am walking in the dark, as there were streets that I avoided when I was a child. I find that I am not afraid of Puerto Ricans, but I cannot restrain my nervousness whenever I pass a group of Negroes standing in front of a bar or sauntering down the street. I know now, as I did not know when I was a child, that power is on my side, that the police are working for me and not for them. And knowing this I feel ashamed and guilty, like the good liberal I have grown up to be. Yet the twinges of fear and the resentment they bring and the self-contempt they arouse are not to be gainsaid.

But envy? Why envy? And hatred? Why hatred? Here again the intensities have lessened and everything has been complicated and qualified by the guilts and the resulting over-compensations that are the heritage of the enlightened middle-class world of which I am now a member. Yet just as in childhood I envied Negroes for what seemed to me their superior masculinity, so I envy them today for what seems to me their superior physical grace and beauty. I have come to value physical grace very highly, and I am now capable of aching with all my being when I watch a Negro couple on the dance floor, or a Negro playing baseball or basketball. They are on the kind of terms with their own bodies that I should like to be on with mine, and for that precious quality they seem blessed to me.

The hatred I still feel for Negroes is the hardest of all the old feelings to face or admit, and it is the most hidden and the most overlarded by the conscious attitudes into which I have succeeded in willing myself. It no longer has, as for me it once did, any cause or justification (except, perhaps, that I am constantly being denied my right to an honest expression of the things I earned the right as a child to feel). How, then, do I know that this

* For an account of developments like these, see "The White Liberal's Retreat" by Murray Friedman in the January 1963 *Atlantic Monthly*.

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hatred has never entirely disappeared? I know it from the insane rage that can stir in me at the thought of Negro anti-Semitism; I know it from the disgusting prurience that can stir in me at the sight of a mixed couple; and I know it from the violence that can stir in me whenever I encounter that special brand of paranoid touchiness to which many Negroes are prone.

THIS, then, is where I am; it is not exactly where I think all other white liberals are, but it cannot be so very far away either. And it is because I am convinced that we white Americans are—for whatever reason, it no longer matters—so twisted and sick in our feelings about Negroes that I despair of the present push toward integration. If the pace of progress were not a factor here, there would perhaps be no cause for despair: time and the law and even the international political situation are on the side of the Negroes, and ultimately, therefore, victory—of a sort, anyway—must come. But from everything we have learned from observers who ought to know, pace has become as important to the Negroes as substance. They want equality and they want it *now*, and the white world is yielding to their demand only as much and as fast as it is absolutely being compelled to do. The Negroes know this in the most concrete terms imaginable, and it is thus becoming increasingly difficult to buy them off with rhetoric and promises and pious assurances of support. And so within the Negro community we find more and more people declaring—as Harold R. Isaacs recently put it in these pages*—that they want *out:* people who say that integration will never come, or that it will take a hundred or a thousand years to come, or that it will come at too high a price in suffering and struggle for the pallid and sodden life of the American middle class that at the very best it may bring.

The most numerous, influential, and dangerous movement that has grown out of Negro despair with the goal of integration is, of course, the Black Muslims. This movement, whatever else we may say about it, must be credited with one enduring achievement: it inspired James Baldwin to write an essay† which deserves to be placed among the classics of our language. Everything Baldwin has ever been trying to tell us is distilled here into a statement of overwhelming persuasiveness and prophetic magnificence. Baldwin's message is and always has been simple. It is this: "Color is not a human or personal reality; it is a political reality." And Baldwin's demand is correspondingly simple: color must be forgotten, lest we all be smited with a vengeance "that does not really depend on, and cannot really be executed by, any person or organization, and that cannot be prevented by any police force or army: historical vengeance, a cosmic vengeance based on the law that we recognize when we say, 'Whatever goes up must come down.' " The Black Muslims Baldwin portrays as a sign and a warning to the intransigent white world. They come to proclaim how deep is the Negro's disaffection with the white world and all its works, and Baldwin implies that no American Negro can fail to respond somewhere in his being to their message: that the white man is the devil, that Allah has doomed him to destruction, and that the black man is about to inherit the earth. Baldwin of course knows that this nightmare inversion of the racism from which the black man has suffered can neither win nor even point to the neighborhood in which victory might be located. For in his view the neighborhood of victory lies in exactly the opposite direction: the transcendence of color through love.

Yet the tragic fact is that love is not the

* "Integration and the Negro Mood," December 1962.

† Originally published last November in the *New Yorker* under the title "Letter From a Region in My Mind," it has just been reprinted (along with a new introduction) by Dial Press under the title *The Fire Next Time* (128 pp., $3.50).

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answer to hate—not in the world of politics, at any rate. Color is indeed a political rather than a human or a personal reality and if politics (which is to say power) has made it into a human and a personal reality, then only politics (which is to say power) can unmake it once again. But the way of politics is slow and bitter, and as impatience on the one side is matched by a setting of the jaw on the other, we move closer and closer to an explosion and blood may yet run in the streets.

Will this madness in which we are all caught never find a resting-place? Is there never to be an end to it? In thinking about the Jews I have often wondered whether their survival as a distinct group was worth one hair on the head of a single infant. Did the Jews have to survive so that six million innocent people should one day be burned in the ovens of Auschwitz? It is a terrible question and no one, not God himself, could ever answer it to my satisfaction. And when I think about the Negroes in America and about the image of integration as a state in which the Negroes would take their rightful place as another of the protected minorities in a pluralistic society, I wonder whether they really believe in their hearts that such a state can actually be attained, and if so *why* they should wish to survive as a distinct group. I think I know why the Jews once wished to survive (though I am less certain as to why we still do): they not only believed that God had given them no choice, but they were tied to a memory of past glory and a dream of imminent redemption. What does the American Negro have that might correspond to this? His past is a stigma, his color is a stigma, and his vision of the future is the hope of erasing the stigma by making color irrelevant, by making it disappear as a fact of consciousness.

I share this hope, but I cannot see how it will ever be realized unless color does *in fact* disappear: and that means not integration, it means assimilation, it means —let the brutal word come out—miscegenation. The Black Muslims, like their racist counterparts in the white world, accuse the "so-called Negro leaders" of secretly pursuing miscegenation as a goal. The racists are wrong, but I wish they were right, for I believe that the wholesale merging of the two races is the most desirable alternative for everyone concerned. I am not claiming that this alternative can be pursued programmatically or that it is immediately feasible as a solution; obviously there are even greater barriers to its achievement than to the achievement of integration. What I am saying, however, is that in my opinion the Negro problem can be solved in this country in no other way.

I HAVE told the story of my own twisted feelings about Negroes here, and of how they conflict with the moral convictions I have since developed, in order to assert that such feelings must be acknowledged as honestly as possible so that they can be controlled and ultimately disregarded in favor of the convictions. It is *wrong* for a man to suffer because of the color of his skin. Beside that clichéd proposition of liberal thought, what argument can stand and be respected? If the arguments are the arguments of feeling, they must be made to yield; and one's own soul is not the worst place to begin working a huge social transformation. Not so long ago, it used to be asked of white liberals, "Would you like your sister to marry one?" When I was a boy and my sister was still unmarried, I would certainly have said no to that question. But now I am a man, my sister is already married, and I have daughters. If I were to be asked today whether I would like a daughter of mine "to marry one," I would have to answer: "No, I wouldn't *like* it at all. I would rail and rave and rant and tear my hair. And then I hope I would have the courage to curse myself for raving and ranting, and to give her my blessing. How dare I withhold it at the behest of the child I once was and against the man I now have a duty to be?"

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ALBERT GOLDMAN

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE JEWISH MUSICIAN

In the last hundred and fifty years—that is, beginning with the emancipation of the Jew in Western Europe—Jews have risen to a remarkable prominence in the world of music; today one might say they virtually dominate it. Considerable discussion has been devoted to the question of what accounts for the peculiar Jewish affinity with music—an affinity which has come to be taken for granted by Jews and Gentiles alike. The standard explanations (for example, that Jewish culture is emotionally freer and more expressive than other cultures, or that music was almost the only profession with status open to European Jews) are hardly satisfactory, since they cannot take into account the special demands of gift or genius exacted by a musical career. Nor will the history and character of Jewish religious practice—another witness often called upon—suffice to explain this affinity. However crucial the role played by music in the ancient Temple service—later partly incorporated into a synagogue service that was entirely sung or chanted—the fact remains that all the centuries in the Diaspora had effectively cut the Jewish community off from both its own musical sources in the past and from the living, developing musical tradition of the peoples who surrounded it. The Jews who burst forth from their enclosed communities into the world of 19th-century Europe left behind them a tradition that had grown almost puritanically arid in its relation to music. Such musical predisposition as had somehow been kept alive in their tradition only came into flower in its belated encounter with European culture.

But whatever the explanation, come into flower it did, and with amazing rapidity. A list of the names of Jews who have established formidable reputations in all branches of music would fill volumes. Even in the briefest summary we find among the serious composers Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Offenbach, Mahler, Schoenberg, Weill, Milhaud, Bloch, Dukas, Aaron Copland; composers of operettas and more recently musical comedies, Rudolf Friml, Emerich Kalman, Sigmund Romberg, Oscar Straus, George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, and of course Leonard Bernstein; among interpretive artists and conductors, Artur Schnabel, Wanda Landowska, Myra Hess, Rudolf Serkin, Fritz Kreisler, Jascha Heifetz, Joseph Szigeti, Emanuel Feuermann, the members of the Budapest and Lener Quartets, Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, Pierre Monteux, Serge Koussevitsky. In criticism, in musicology, and in the related fields of teaching, publishing, collecting, broadcasting, and recording, much the same situation prevails.

Such a list, however, while it testifies to a disproportionate participation of Jews in this special world, at the same time

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points to another, perhaps more interesting and more significant question. For what becomes immediately apparent is the general disparity in achievement between those Jews who have composed music and those who have played or in some other way taught us about it. Jews may have come to dominate music, but they have not dominated, and still do not, all fields of it equally; nor do they bring to all the same capacity for creative contribution. Why this should be, is a question whose answer takes us beyond music itself to the larger problem of the role of the Jew as creator and interpreter within Western culture.

AT THE beginning of the Emancipation only about 15 per cent of world Jewry were living in Western Europe. Of these, only the more affluent were able to profit from the new social and political privileges. From this special class came the first Jewish composers to attain fame in the world at large—Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer.

Felix Mendelssohn's grandfather was Moses Mendelssohn, the renowned Jewish philosopher and man of letters, whose circle of friends included Lessing and other important German intellectuals. Felix, the son of a prosperous banker, grew up in extremely pleasant surroundings, in a sophisticated milieu in Berlin whose superior cultural values, affluence, and ease were to be reflected in his gay and graceful music. His father had his children baptized, later converted, himself. Felix subsequently married the daughter of a Protestant minister. In the voluminous correspondence between Felix and his father, there are practically no allusions to the fact of their Jewish origin; rather, one senses an attitude which must have been charged with embarrassing emotions.

As a member of the prosperous and cultivated bourgeoisie of the Biedermeier period, Mendelssohn began to compose music that was clearly intended to meet its aspirations and conform to its religious pieties. After successfully accomplishing the revival of Bach's "Saint Matthew Passion" and Handel's "Israel in Egypt," he went on to attempt his own revival of the great tradition of German Protestant music, through his oratorios, "Elijah" and "St. Paul," his organ compositions, and his "Reformation Symphony"—with its elaborate treatment of *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott.*

This effort to resurrect the vigorous Protestant tradition in his own works—an extraordinary ambition, given not only Mendelssohn's Jewish origin but also the fact that the music of his day was almost entirely secular in character—inevitably had to end in artistic failure. Mendelssohn had no profound sense of Christianity: his identification with Protestantism was social and cultural rather than religious. With an essentially unreal style—an archaic pastiche of Bach and Handel, and occasional suggestions of his own musical personality in the lighter and more graceful sections—he began to work upon texts that would have challenged even the resources of his great masters. Comparing his "Elijah" to Handel's "Israel in Egypt" one immediately notices the weakness, gaudiness, and sentimentality of Mendelssohn's efforts. There is not even a hint in Mendelssohn of the moral passion, the grave, brooding profundity of the biblical Jews that the Protestant Handel was able to envision and communicate, and there is none of the electrifying energy of his model. In writing Christian music, Mendelssohn could only feign a piety he did not possess and, in trying to force an emotion he did not feel, he ended by treating a subject of the highest seriousness in an essentially histrionic manner.

Moreover, in his oratorios Mendelssohn was seldom able to find opportunities to express the qualities that were uniquely and most authentically his own. Basically he was a fantasist—at his best in such youthful music as "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Here all his strongest virtues appear—charm, whimsy, romance, a deft

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sense of scene and atmosphere that rises to the splendid theatrical pageantry of the "Wedding March." This note of breathless excitement, of flight into a shimmering fairyland, was the natural center of his musical imagination, and it was for the most part lost in his oratorios, written as they were to satisfy the aspirations of his class.

There is, one feels, something typical of the Jewish genius in music about Mendelssohn's life and work. With his uninterrupted musical and personal success, his aura of vivacity and charm, his theatricality and adaptiveness, as well as his perpetual enthusiasm for everything musical, he reminds us particularly of Leonard Bernstein, another clever mimic of greatness. Swept along by the pressures and rewards of cultural assimilation, Mendelssohn was led to abandon his native gifts and to score triumphs that now seem only a dreary waste of his creative spirit.

A somewhat different example of the type was Giacomo Meyerbeer (born Jakob Liebmann Beer in Berlin in 1791), who was also the son of a wealthy and highly cultured banker, Herz Beer. Another Jewish child prodigy who was encouraged by his family and given the best instruction available, Meyerbeer was one of the best pianists in Berlin by the age of nine and wrote a successful German opera, "Jeptha's Gelübde," at the age of twenty.

Meyerbeer's main talent lay in his mimicry, his ability to assimilate and reproduce a variety of styles. During the Venice Carnival of 1815, he heard Rossini's "Tancredi"; enraptured by it, he immediately altered his own style and in practically no time produced a series of highly successful Italian operas. His friend and fellow pupil, Carl Maria von Weber, wrote to him, "My heart bleeds to see a German composer of creative power stoop to become an imitator in order to win favor with the crowd," but the facile Meyerbeer was undeterred. Next, he moved to Paris where he devoted seven years to a thorough study of everything French and especially French opera from Lully on. A visitor to his library was surprised to find "hundreds of scores great and small, many of which were hardly known by name even to the most initiated." His preparation complete, Meyerbeer launched his career in French opera and produced, with Scribe, "Robert le Diable" (1831), "Les Huguenots" (1836), "Le Prophète" (1849), "Dinorah" (1859), and "L'Africaine" (1864). Each one was a tremendous hit.

Like the oratorios of Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer's operas were aimed at the pretentious bourgeois public of the time. They were gigantic celebrations of the materialistic spirit, performed on stages crammed with elaborate and costly objects. For "Robert le Diable," according to William Crosten, "no effort was spared. . . . The English stage traps were introduced, gas illumination was used for the first time on the French opera stage and advantage was taken of the varied effects of perspective, illusion, and chiaroscuro which had been developed in the Boulevard theaters. . . . We are assured that the *mise en scène* . . . cost nearly 200,000 francs."

Meyerbeer drove himself to win fame and prestige. (Heine quipped that he fulfilled the true Christian ideal, for he could not rest while there remained a single unconverted soul.) As we might expect from both his motives and methods of working, the music of his operas is incredibly, monumentally inane—a hodge-podge of nondescript themes and devices taken from other composers, garish orchestral brilliance, and dreary letter-perfect declamation. Meyerbeer was so passionless and empty a musician that Donald Francis Tovey once remarked that he could not "regard him as a real person at all," and could not be bothered to argue with people who could. He is the extreme instance in the history of music of a talented composer devoting his energies to gratifying a dubious public taste.

Offenbach, the son of a cantor in Cologne, was the last of the three fa-

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mous 19th-century Jewish composers of the "first generation." He began as a cellist in the Paris Opera Orchestra and then went on to write his risqué operettas. Performed in a charming little band-box theater, they quickly caught the Parisian fancy and brought him immediate fame and success.

In Offenbach's compositions we have a later and more popular version of the sensuous excitement and romantic sentiment that mark Mendelssohn's best music. But Offenbach's excitement, in contrast to Mendelssohn's, contains an undercurrent of incipient hysteria clearly seen in his version of the can-can. His treatment of love has little depth or conviction, evoking mainly the pleasant, luxurious sensuality one finds in the "Barcarolle." Offenbach, however, had none of Meyerbeer's pretentiousness, which is perhaps why he was able to produce far more genuine work while being similarly motivated by the desire for popular esteem. Like Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer both, he had a histrionic flair, his output was prodigious, his style was adapted to the musical fashions of the day, and his success tremendous. He died after attending rehearsals for his only serious work, "Les Contes d'Hoffman."

Of the many traits shared by these three principal composers of the first generation after the Emancipation, perhaps the most important was the flexibility which made them capable of rapidly assimilating the spirit of their society and of reproducing it with acceptable plausibility. This flexibility may seem surprising. Removed by only a single generation from a world with a sharply defined cultural identity of its own, these composers might have been expected to encounter serious difficulties in adopting, much less adapting to, the tone and attitudes of an alien culture. Assimilation, in the sense of conformity to manners and social values not naturally one's own, is often easily achieved, but a much greater degree of assimilation is required of an artist who sets out to express the spirit of a culture in which he himself is not deeply rooted. And yet, all the famous Jewish composers of the 19th century seem perfectly representative of their age and nation: Mendelssohn's work is as typical of the German Protestant strain of the Romantic period as Meyerbeer's is of the popular operatic theater of the day, and as Offenbach's is of the giddy Paris of the Second Empire.

However, when we compare these three composers to their non-Jewish contemporaries, we see that their assimilation—however extraordinary in its swiftness, thoroughness, and seeming naturalness—was at bottom merely an adaptation. For all their facility and brilliance, they did nothing to advance the musical culture of their time. They were distinguished for neither originality, creative form as opposed to the manipulation of convention, nor for emotional and spiritual depth. Other composers, less richly talented and less technically skilled but carried along by the assurance of the rooted personality, managed to write more important music. A case in point is Schumann, who lacked Mendelssohn's sequacious fluency, whose developments are merely thematic transpositions, and who was far from being a master of orchestration. Yet his work is more interesting than Mendelssohn's, deeper, more original, more passionate. A "progressive Romantic," Schumann aimed at realizing a personal vision without falling back on the musical conventions of his day. Unlike the Jewish composers, he was not very much at home in the world, but he was able to go his own way in music, unhampered by a compulsion to provide what contemporary taste demanded.

In Germany the sudden prominence of Jews in music soon attracted attention, and in time a Jewish "question" arose. In 1850, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* published a discussion of "Hebrew Artistic Taste," which included Richard Wagner's famous, or infamous, piece, *Das Judentum in der Musik* ("The Jews in Music"), an

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essay which is still the primary document of its kind.

"The Jews in Music" is usually considered the work of a violent anti-Semite, but it is unwise to dismiss Wagner's ideas simply on these grounds, for his basic argument contains as much truth on the subject as anyone could have seen during the 19th century. The strength of this argument lies in its perception that the newly assimilated Jewish composer, being alienated both from Jewish life and from the life of his adopted nation, lacked the prime requisite of the true artist: the deep cultural roots that provide an instinctive grasp of the unconscious aspirations and conflicts of his society and that enable an individual writing out of his own being to bring forth at the same time a true expression of the spirit of his nation. This, according to Wagner, the Jewish artist can never do. Where the Jew *is* equipped to excel is in intellectual activity, for his precarious social position requires, above all, that he understand the society in order to overcome his problems within it.

WAGNER'S insight is not only applicable to the first generation of assimilated Jewish composers, but also helps to explain the ambiguous and frustrating position of the later ones. The career of Gustav Mahler presents the most tragic example. Born into a lower-middle-class family in Bohemia in 1864, Mahler in many respects resembled the composers of the first generation: his most striking qualities were brilliance, restlessness, and technical dexterity. Mahler, too, was a man of the theater and a man of the world, a highly successful opera conductor. Like his fellow-pupil, Hugo Wolf, and his one-time teacher, Anton Bruckner, he began his career by aligning himself with the progressive school of Wagner. But unlike Wolf and Bruckner, both of whom possessed great integrity of spirit, Mahler suffered from a devastating uncertainty about his own identity. His work shows that he was torn in every direction—toward the *"Kolossal"* (the "Symphony of a Thousand") and toward the intimate (his *lieder* and the chamber music texture of some of his larger works); toward the heroic style of Beethoven and the pathos and nostalgia that we associate with Schubert; toward religious faith (the settings of *Veni Creator Spiritus* and the final scene of *Faust*) and toward pessimism and despair ("Das Lied von der Erde"); toward folk naiveté (the "Fourth Symphony" and the settings of *Das Knaben Wunderhorn*) and toward avant-garde experimentation (as in the scherzo of the "Second Symphony").

Mahler was a highly intelligent, sophisticated, and responsive man pitting the force of his ego against an immensely rich and complicated culture that was beginning to go to pieces. His work gives the impression of an unremitting struggle to amass and synthesize this entire culture into a single, gigantic form. ("What I mean by a symphony," he said, "is taking all the available technical resources and with them building myself a world.") And one suspects that the reason he repeatedly fell short of his ambitions lay in his unwillingness to discipline his improvisatory gifts —an unwillingness which involved a fundamental lack of clarity about his real intentions.

Thus he never produced the musical counterpart to *Faust, Part II* or *The Magic Mountain,* but only a bizarre collection of disjointed fragments, fruits of a restless and neurotic temperament. His best work is that in which, whether consciously or not, he came momentarily to terms with this temperament and wrote phantasmagoric music: a spectral nightscape across which moves a great funeral cortege, numbering all the vanished dead—the tragic, the grotesque, and the sublime—forever advancing into an undiscerned but hopeless future. Otherwise, we have in Mahler's music the most poignant instance of the Jewish cultural dilemma, and the best confirmation of Wagner's theory. Trying to make an alien culture his own, he was capable of imitating everything and of

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imagining himself as everybody, but he remained to the end powerless to locate and express a world that might truly belong to him.

For a time Mahler had a protégé in Arnold Schoenberg, who in later years dedicated to him his epoch-making treatise, the *Harmonielehre* ("Theory of Harmony"). Both were products of *fin de siècle* Vienna, but the inventor of atonalism was in every important respect the anti-type of the 19th-century symphonist. In contrast to Mahler, who struggled constantly to sum up his own age on the model of Beethoven's "Ninth," Schoenberg, after his first derivative compositions, tried to find some way of capitalizing on his position of cultural alienation and struck out boldly into the new world of modern music. Pursuing his astonishingly original vision with unswerving logic and courage, Schoenberg became the first Jewish composer to lead rather than follow. He did not so much extend the development of European music (a role that can be more accurately assigned to Stravinsky) as smash the mold in which all previous music had been cast.

Perhaps the most revolutionary figure in the history of music, Schoenberg was yet not so much a great composer as a great thinker, less artist than intellectual. His compositions have never appealed to listeners, as have those of his disciples, Berg and Webern; they are best regarded as demonstrations of his theory, difficult and interesting experiments designed to test and promote radically new ideas. One might even say that Schoenberg's works exist to be pondered as profound aphorisms of musical wisdom rather than to be played or heard. In short, he is more properly to be classed with Jewish intellectual giants like Freud and Einstein than with the major composers.

But if Schoenberg's atonal system represents the greatest intellectual achievement of any Jewish composer, the greatest artistic achievement must be credited to a composer who belongs to the ranks of the entertainers and popular musicians—Kurt Weill. Weill's cabaret operas, written in collaboration with Bertholt Brecht, are in the same vein as the poetry of Heine, one that might be termed the "sense of the uncomfortable." Drawing upon the anger and frustration, the awkwardness and humiliation that had always been felt by Jews, this vein appeared as a type of sensibility in music only when such feelings became widespread in German culture generally.

In conception, the "Threepenny Opera" is itself reminiscent of the Jewish attitude toward *schnorrers,* poverty, and the plights and dodges of the downtrodden. And the melodies of Kurt Weill, yet another son of a cantor, have much of the quality of a Yiddish lament. But without the guidance of Brecht's texts, it is doubtful that Weill would ever have discovered the rich creative source which lay buried in his divided and anxious soul. In his later years, after coming to America and being cut off from collaboration with Brecht, Weill immediately—and, it seems, deliberately—launched into a period of composing saccharine musicals that stand in the greatest possible contrast to the acid compositions of his Berlin period: "Knickerbocker Holiday," "Lady in the Dark," "Street Scene," "Lost in the Stars," and "Down in the Valley." At the time of his death in 1950 he was working with his American collaborator, Maxwell Anderson, on a musical version of *Huckleberry Finn.*

Thus Weill, for all the strength and honesty of his early work, eventually fell into the pattern of the other Jewish composers we have been considering. Beginning as a wholly original writer who helped to establish a new art form, he ended as a victim of that fatal assimilative power which makes it easy for a composer to satisfy a popular audience but impossible for him to develop along the lines indicated by his natural gifts.

There is no echo in the works of Ameri-

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can Jewish composers of the "sense of the uncomfortable," for the "sense of the uncomfortable" seems to emerge out of a greater degree of cultural alienation than Jews have experienced in America. At the same time, however, the music of American Jewish composers has not yet shown any signs of the spiritual poise, the solid sense of self, that comes from thoroughgoing rootedness in a culture. Perhaps the best example of what can happen to musical talent under these conditions of non-alienation combined with imperfect assimilation is to be found in the career of Leonard Bernstein.

Compared to the early Weill, Bernstein is an unimpressive figure. His earliest compositions add up to little more than cleverly orchestrated echoes of Gershwin and Copland. His most famous serious work, the "Jeremiah Symphony," owes its modest success to the lavishness of its orchestration, and perhaps also to the fact that it is both simple and "modernistic," enabling the general public to feel that for once it is appreciating contemporary music. But despite a certain technical brilliance, the "Jeremiah Symphony" is a musically derivative and immature composition whose most memorable moments are projections of that clenching *Weltschmerz* which is the common condition of all sensitive young Americans.

Bernstein's commercial ventures, with one exception, hardly stand up any better than his more serious compositions. "On the Town" sounds like any other musical of that period. The score of "Candide," though far more sophisticated than that of the conventional musical, is ultimately trivial. The score of "West Side Story," on the other hand, is on a par with the best of Menotti and Gershwin. It exhibits first-rate craftsmanship and an ability to redirect the power of the modern symphony orchestra to the pit of a Broadway theater. Still, for all his cleverness and even at his best, he seems vulgar and crude when compared to the Weill of "Threepenny Opera." Musically, he is neither here nor there, operating on many different levels at once, capable of sporadic brilliance but not of sustained power or depth, easily shifting from the serious to the popular, and from composing to conducting, never at rest, never in a state either of poise on the one side or trenchant discontent on the other.

IF, however, uncertainty of accomplishment is the mark of the Jewish composers who have appeared since the Enlightenment, indisputable greatness has marked the work of Jews as interpretive musicians. Not only have virtually all the major violinists of modern times been Jews, but also a remarkably large number of the leading conductors, pianists, and other performers. It is worth noting that the interpretive performer is a phenomenon that hardly existed in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when the great performers (Liszt, Paganini, Vieuxtemps, and later, Sarasate, Busoni, and Rachmaninoff) wrote what they played. The virtuoso composer-performer has been superseded in our time by the interpretive performer whose talents combine those of the musical scholar and critic with those of the artist.

The career of Artur Schnabel is typical of that of the great Jewish performer, a musician who is often more creative than his counterpart, the composer. As a child prodigy in Vienna, Schnabel studied with the famous pedagogue, Theodor Leschetizky, who immediately recognized the boy's special gifts, prophesying, "You will never be a pianist—you will be a musician." By the age of eighteen, Schnabel was already weary of Viennese *"Schlamperei"* and went to Berlin, where he first achieved fame less as a virtuoso than as an interpretive artist. Preferring study to performance, he devoted years to perfecting his interpretations of the finest works of the past, and steadfastly refused to play anything but them.

This relentless emphasis on musicianship rather than performance was at the bottom of Schnabel's greatness. He brought

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to his superb interpretations of Beethoven a keen critical and scholarly understanding, editing the works from manuscripts and early editions—a fact which supports the contention that he was at least equally interested in developing his own conception of the music as in playing it. Schnabel also introduced into the concert hall works which had previously been neglected, like the sonatas of Schubert, and presented such familiar but previously misunderstood music as the concertos of Mozart and the late compositions of Beethoven in a truer light.

In general, Schnabel did not identify himself with Jewish culture; nor, apparently, did he possess any marked feelings of Jewishness. He left Germany in protest against the Nazis, but he remained an almost totally assimilated European. What Schnabel did possess as a Jew, however, was the same acquisitive ability we have noted in the 19th-century composers. Since an interpretive artist must transport the audience backward, and the work forward, in time, the Jew's predisposition toward scholarship (evident even in Meyerbeer) and his typical sensitivity to the conditions of the present moment can be said to aid him in interpreting music perhaps as much as they handicap him in composing it. Even though the cultural adaptation of the Jewish musician seldom transforms his *own* soul, it can provide an almost impeccable matching of surfaces that operates to the distinct advantage of his interpretations.

FOR THE composer, a binding sensitivity to the present cultural moment can be advantageous only if he writes popular music. Popular songs are curiously impersonal, and therefore a successful composer of musical comedy mainly needs the ability to reflect the fugitive moods of the moment. If he is tempted to inject a note of uniquely personal feeling, he invariably finds the popularity of his work suffering. Most of the legion of Jewish song writers have avoided this temptation.

For the serious Jewish composer one relatively recent alternative to cultural adaptation and its dead ends of derivativeness, fragmentation, and popular success has been to exploit "differentness" by producing determinedly Jewish music. In part, this alternative was opened up by the spread of Zionism, in part by the wave of nationalistic music which preceded it in Eastern Europe. (During the close of the 19th century, as many of the lesser European nationalities woke to cultural consciousness, there was a flood of music like "Moldau," "Finlandia," Hungarian and Rumanian dances and rhapsodies.) An added impetus to the rise of Jewish folk music was provided by the social conditions of East European Jewry, which were far less conducive to assimilatory tendencies than conditions in the West. Finally, once the East European Jews began moving to Israel, their indigenous music was further enriched by the ancient folk melodies of the Yemenites and other Semitic peoples, resulting in a new strain of Palestinian folk music.

However, if Jewish nationalism once seemed to hold out a promise for serious music, this promise has not been fulfilled. The Society for Jewish Folk Music (founded in 1900) collected, transcribed, and arranged folk material which was later used in light pieces and then in more ambitious works, but only one Jewish composer of international reputation was ever attracted to the nationalist vein: Ernest Bloch. Bloch was reared in Western Europe, and unlike the strictly nationalist composers, he did not limit himself to working exclusively with authentic folk or synagogue materials. His tonal language was basically the same as that of most modern composers, and was only occasionally colored by allusions to actual Jewish idiom. Yet Bloch's music came closer to achieving genuine power in a self-consciously Jewish style than any of the works of the East European or Israeli composers. His best-known composition is, of course, "Schelomo," a rhapsody for 'cello and

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orchestra, inspired by his reading of Ecclesiastes. This piece is both somber and gorgeously oriental, deriving a special plangency from its suggestion of the eternal lamentations of the Jews. One can argue that this plangency is too bizarre, too lachrymose for serious music; nevertheless, "Schelomo" remains a composition of enormous power, one which promised much for the future of Jewish music.

That the promise has yet to be fulfilled is perhaps partly to be ascribed to Bloch's own failure to continue in this vein. His last major effort to write a self-consciously Jewish work was "Sacred Service" (*Avodath Hakodesh*), a setting of the Sabbath morning service prescribed by the Union Prayer Book of the Reform Synagogue of the United States. The "Sacred Service" is as bland musically as the text for which it was written—a text that resembles a weak derivative of the King James Bible, and that offers no inspiration for the barbaric and opulent style that contributed so much to the impact of "Schelomo."

Bloch has had no successors who have been able to make significant use of the emotional and imaginative ethos of the East European Jew. In Israeli music, as one might expect, the tendency is to break with the culture of European Jewry and to move in the direction of the ancient Semitic sources, as preserved, for example, in the folk music of Yemen. But the main result has been a music that appears culturally backward and somewhat shallow: the Israeli composers, after all, are merely doing today what the composers of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bohemia, and Rumania were doing fifty or eighty years ago. Moreover, nationalist music in general has rarely come to more than being picturesque. (The one great exception is the work of Bela Bartok, a fascinating example of the abstraction of folk essences and their free manipulation in more sophisticated musical forms.) In any event, Israel has failed so far to produce an impressive body of music, and is unlikely to do so as long as the nationalist vein remains dominant.

THE ALIENATION from gentile values which characterizes the nationalist movement is, of course, only one of the possibilities open to the Jewish composers whose marginal position in Western culture has created such serious problems of identity in the past. Alienation can have, and has had, many other uses for the Jewish artist—ranging from satire and parody, as in Heine or Weill, or (unconsciously) Mahler, to revolutionary innovation, as in Kafka or Schoenberg. However, such figures as Weill and Schoenberg, as well as Bloch and Schnabel, now belong to the past; their particular problems and opportunities as Jewish musicians were shaped by a world that ended in 1940. Because of the almost total destruction of Jewish life in Europe, and because of the special problems that beset music in a small and very young country like Israel, it seems probable that the future of the Jewish commitment to music will be largely a matter of what happens in America. Certain prospects are already fairly visible. For one thing, the generally prosperous state of American Jewry can provide strong financial support for the careers of its aspiring young musicians. In music, economic assistance is essential: the composer's products have little commercial value, and the performing artist must spend years in training and in acquiring a reputation. There is no information available as to the number of young Jewish musicians in this country, but one has the impression of a continuing stream of new names. In general, Jewish participation in all the arts is steadily increasing, a development which clearly has resulted from the growing economic as well as social and cultural security of the Jew in American life.

On the other hand, the steady progress of assimilation is likely to have the effect of reducing the minority-group motivation, the drive for achievement and status,

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which has always been one of the greatest sources of Jewish energy, as well as failure, in music. Similarly, the ideals of cultural aspiration that the Jews acquired in Europe cannot be expected to survive as a matter of course in America. In fact, it is already evident that the final stages of cultural assimilation can involve a repudiation of these aspirations as being embarrassing vestiges of the ghetto.

One can envision, then, both enriched conditions for creative development in music and a simultaneous loss of interest in the years to come. But as always, the determining factor will be the attitude of the general community toward music. If, as seems likely, it should take an increasingly positive view of the arts as providing a last refuge for individuality and freedom of expression, then the loss of a specifically Jewish motivation may be compensated for by a more general American one. Such a development could conceivably be of particular benefit to American Jewish composers and help to close the historical gap we have been noting between the interpretive and creative achievements of the Jewish commitment to music.

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JASON EPSTEIN

"GOOD BUNNIES ALWAYS OBEY": BOOKS FOR AMERICAN CHILDREN

The boy should enclose and keep, as his life, the child at the heart of him, and never let it go . . . the child is not meant to die but to be forever fresh born.
—George MacDonald

EVER SINCE AN 18th-century bookseller named John Newbery commissioned Oliver Goldsmith to compile the first Mother Goose, and thus launched an industry, the publication of books for children has been, among other things, a way of making money. Lately it has become a way of making a lot of money, and as more of the nation's effort comes to be invested in educating the young, the publication of books for children promises to become a major aspect of American business. Even more, it promises to become a business of great social and political importance, for it is trafficking in nothing less than the next generation, which is to say our whole future and the future of all our technological, political, and social machinery.

In 1961 some 1,700 new children's books were published. Total sales of all children's books, not counting school texts, came to 277,420,000 copies, mainly through some 25,000 toy, department, and novelty stores, five-and-tens, and supermarkets, and to a lesser extent through the 9,000 libraries in America and the 1,804 bookstores. A growing number have also found their way into the schools—through class-room libraries, of which there are now some 25,000—to supplement the dreary and often unreadable textbooks. But schools continue to buy mainly textbooks, which are not a part of this discussion—though much of what is wrong with American textbooks is also wrong with children's books in general and for the same reasons. Children's books have increasingly become part of a bureaucratically administered subculture, largely cut off by a dense fog of conventional and irrelevant theory from the best literary and scientific culture of the community at large.

Such isolation is relatively recent. The great children's books of the past, though they often represented a distinct genre, were simply a department of literature, and they were commonly written by authors who, in contrast to the situation today, were not primarily writers for children. Such figures as Defoe, Swift, Blake, Coleridge, Melville, Hawthorne, Mark Twain, Kipling, Doyle, etc., wrote for children either inadvertently or out of a romantic preoccupation with childhood itself. Childhood for them was sacred and superior, in its vitality and powers of perception, to maturity, which was compromised through having accommodated itself too much to the world. In one way or another these writers believed that the recollected vitality of childhood sustained

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a man, if anything did, throughout his entire life and that, conversely, civilization —Wordsworth's "prison house"—was deadly. This same belief, in political terms, led Thomas Jefferson to demand a revolution every twenty years as each new generation coming of age asserted itself against the accumulated inhibitions of the generation in being. And one finds it again, less reasonably, in today's adults who occupy themselves with cowboy heroes and perhaps among the President and his friends playing touch football.

BEFORE the 18th century there were no children's books as such, except for the chap-books, though works like Aesop's Fables and the story of King Arthur in its various forms interested children as well as adults. And, of course, except for the catechisms and grammars, there were no textbooks. There was only the hornbook from which children learned the alphabet and the numbers from one to ten. Lessons were usually read by the teacher and the children learned nearly everything orally and by rote or by observation and imitation (a process which corresponds somewhat to the theory of conditioned reflexes according to which modern teaching machines have been developed; the older method was, however, less passive and more social).

The use of books in the classroom is rather recent and their pedagogic value, in view of the widespread criticisms that have lately been made of them, cannot yet be taken for granted. And if one watches young children growing up, it appears that even the schools themselves tend to inflate the part that they play in educating the young. Like other young animals, children seem to learn more or less directly from their environment and by testing and observing their parents, their playmates, and perhaps their teachers. Bright children, as they grow older, traditionally have found their schools dull and confining, except for the other children they meet there, and the brighter, the more explosive and spontaneous the youngsters are, the more their classes are likely to bore them. It is at least plausible to suggest that the fault may be in the process of formal education itself. Certainly there is something wrong with the programs and books that the children are expected to put up with.

The great body of children's literature and the really vital branch of it, despite the hundreds of children's books published last year and the even greater number that will appear this year, remains within the oral tradition—carried on over the centuries by the children themselves. The rhymes and songs, the crucial bits of information, the forms of behavior, the loyalties and friendships, the superstitions and games, the sexual discoveries that children communicate to one another as they grow older have always formed the basis of early education. It is from these that the children learn, far more than they ever do from books or in their classes, the language, its rhythm, and the fundamental principles of ethics: i.e., how to keep out of trouble, the fatal knowledge of which begins the long, painful, and inevitable movement away from childhood. As Iona and Peter Opie remarked in their brilliant study, *The Lore and Language of School Children,* "The world-wide fraternity of children is the greatest of savage tribes and the only one which shows no signs of dying out."

But the Opies were optimistic. The savage tribe has suddenly become a market—a big one—and the woods are full of salesmen, typically disguised as missionaries. Education is the new religion and books are among the trinkets with which to lure the children into the civilized world. As Josette Frank, Reading Consultant to the Child Study Association of America has written, "[Today] we have an opportunity to develop better educated, better informed, increasingly cultured citizens and more of them than was ever possible in times past. There is a new public for books, and this public includes children." And later she adds, "Our role is to

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be alert to all that goes on in a child's world, ready to offer a book that further explains a motion picture; or to direct attention to a television program that amplifies a book just read, or to discover how comics may lead on to new avenues for a child to explore."

The trouble with Miss Frank's point of view is its assumption that the civilized world as she conceives it is necessarily fit for children to grow up in and that children will unquestionably take part in it on the terms she proposes. "Today," Miss Frank goes on, "long before [children] are ready for higher education, the arts and sciences are there for the taking, in pictures and stories. Political campaigns are suddenly intelligible to ten years olds. With the turn of a dial or the riffling of a picture magazine, they may have glimpses of scientific researches and of the men and women who are grappling with them. Perhaps they would never have known what an East Indian looked like, but now the United Nations delegate from India appears on their television screen and speaks to them in perfect English. The baseball hero comes to talk to them. So does the President of the United States. The people in the news are real to our boys and girls."

In other words, it has now become possible to alienate children from childhood in ways that would have made Wordsworth's head swim. Today's children, hardly out of their cribs, can be shoved by the children's book industry and its affiliated bureaucracy of educators, reviewers, specialists, and consultants, straight into the "civilized" world of television, advertising, and the cold war through processes which, when we hear of them in other societies, we call brainwashing.

In America there are some 4,000 experts who, like Miss Frank, concern themselves with children's reading. Their influence on the kinds of books that are published and bought for children by schools, libraries, and parents is enormous, and their power, until recently, has been enhanced by the scornful indifference with which they have been regarded by the intellectual community at large. Though the experts' inclinations tend to be widely permissive and pluralistic—having devolved from Dewey's idea that a child should be encouraged to develop along the lines in which he is strongest into the quite contrary idea that anything goes so long as the children seem interested and the community doesn't object—their effect is radically inhibiting. Most of these experts work with schools and school boards or in teachers' colleges. Many have taught school themselves, but have given it up for the more prestigious, less frustrated role of administrators. Some are book reviewers or work as curriculum directors. A number of them have been hired by publishers or are engaged as consultants to the various children's book clubs. Most of them, to judge by their own writings, have read very little and are indifferent to the rhythm of English prose. Nevertheless, they have as a group managed to encircle the children's book business to the point where a publisher has to be very fast on his feet, or unusually indifferent to profits, to break through and confront the children with his goods directly.

In the meantime, though the business flourishes, the children themselves increasingly ignore what the experts recommend. Marie Rankin, an expert herself, has noted that the books chosen for the Newbery Medal—a sort of Pulitzer Prize for juveniles awarded annually by members of the American Library Association—are among those the children read least. And while a few of the earlier selections were of a rather high order, if one examines some of the more recent prize-winners, one's sympathies tend to be with the children. Of the four winners for 1961, which presumably are typical of what expert opinion finds admirable these days, three are contemptible by even the most relaxed critical standard, and it is almost impossible to imagine from what point of view

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they may be considered to have any merits at all. With respect to vitality, inventiveness, and style, they are far inferior to the *Nancy Drew*'s and *Tom Swift*'s of an earlier period, which children today continue to read in great quantities though the experts dismiss them now as they did then.

One of the prize-winners, a book called *Belling the Tiger* by Marie Stolz, pointlessly enlarges on the traditional tale: the mice find that they have inadvertently belled not a cat, but a tiger, an elaboration which requires sixty-four pages to complete and which sells for $2.50. But for this price the reader also gets a moral. As the mice are about to report to their elders on their adventures, they become aware that they will not be believed by the grown-ups who are clearly less intelligent than themselves. So rather than create a disturbance they suppress their interesting news, wrap their tails around each other, and fall asleep.

Another prize-winner, in this case the winner of the Gold Medal itself, is equally without accomplishment, though it represents more explicitly than *Belling the Tiger* the preoccupation these writers have with the idea that the young had better subdue, for the sake of avoiding a disturbance within the community, whatever tendencies they may have toward rebelliousness and originality. This book, *The Bronze Bow* by Elizabeth George Speare, is a biblical novel written for a somewhat older group of children than *Belling the Tiger*. It is thickly pious and its factitious historical setting is presented in language so drab and abstract and even, occasionally, illiterate, that it is impossible to adjust one's ear to it ("Prodded on by weary drivers, the camels swayed slowly." "The morsels of food had not begun to whet his hunger.") But the trouble is less with the book's prose or even with its fake historical and religious paraphernalia than with the smugness of its doctrine. The hero is a young Palestinian Jew at the time of Christ. He is meant to represent a juvenile rebel of the sort who today, with a less specific enemy to confront, has become a problem for the authorities. This young man—his name is Daniel—has joined a band of marauders and with them is determined to drive the Romans from his homeland. It is clear from the start—even to those who may not be familiar with Jewish history—that his rebellion is going to fail. But miraculously, a carpenter with magical powers to heal and persuade arrives in town and prevails upon Daniel to come down out of the mountains, return to his blacksmith shop and acquiesce, like everybody else, in the Roman occupation. Eventually Daniel takes this advice and we are led to believe that he will make a profitable marriage to a pretty girl who comes from a nearby suburb.

May Hill Arbuthnot, still another expert, has tried to account for the failure of children to become interested in such stories as these by suggesting that superior literature even among adults is often less admired than trash. But if *The Bronze Bow* is what Miss Arbuthnot means by good literature, then surely there are other reasons to account for this phenomenon. One need only recall the tactics of literature that children have always found interesting to see how far off the mark this sort of product is.

In *Gulliver's Travels,* for example, the hero, bored with his wife, sets out on a series of journeys in the course of which the absurdity of human society is variously illustrated; he concludes that horses are preferable to men. Robinson Crusoe discovers that he can live successfully with an absolute minimum of human society and create a satisfactory world of his own. Alice, tired of her book, escapes the everyday world and encounters a parody of it in which the logical categories that adults claim to think in are, if carried a few steps further, seen to be absurd. The children in E. Nesbit's novels are invariably wiser and enjoy themselves more than their elders, from whom they are forever escap-

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ing. Huckleberry Finn's only friend is an outcast, a fugitive slave, and the world from which they jointly flee is filled with sanctimonious frauds, false friends, and parvenus. Holden Caulfield grows up in a world which proves to be so untrustworthy that clearly he will never take part in it, but in his case there is neither fantasy nor wilderness to which to escape; he will remain "maladjusted."

NOR HAS THIS theme been limited to children's literature. That organized society is hostile to growth and freedom and defeats the individual as, in the literature of an earlier epoch, nature used to do, is a dominant idea in the literary tradition, especially for those modern writers who, in the aftermath of Romanticism, have deliberately concerned themselves with questions of rebellion, privacy, and their own authenticity. It is of interest, however, that in those works which have become great children's literature, the heroes, unlike the protagonists of much modern fiction, manage to survive the environment and even, in such cases as Robinson Crusoe and Doyle's Professor Challenger, to succeed in transforming it. The affection that children have for stories of this kind seems to confirm the affinity that the Romantic writers felt between themselves and childhood and helps to explain why so much fiction of the 19th century appealed, and still appeals, to the young. For until recently the typical literary hero was himself, so to speak, a child growing up and testing his mettle against the world. And if one thinks of that long line of literary adolescents from Don Quixote and Hamlet to Stephen Daedalus, then the idea of childhood and the problem of growing up will appear to be representative, for many of our great writers at least since Shakespeare and Milton, of the human condition itself. All that happened to Adam when he left Paradise is that he was condemned to grow up and become civilized, to put on clothes, deny his nature, and go to work. Mankind, ever since, has been trying, in one way or another, to find its way out of this dilemma.

In proposing a closer affiliation between childhood and the "civilized world" in which the President addresses ten year olds, then, the experts have undertaken not only to alienate children from their own nature but to turn one of literature's great and characteristic themes upside down. Given the refractory nature of childhood, it is not surprising that the children increasingly refuse to take part in the world that the experts are trying to sell them. One suspects that they sense the fraudulence and despair of it and that like such writers as Joyce and Faulkner, with whom they share this view, they have retreated, some more than others, to worlds of their own while the juvenile authorities and the Sunday book reviewers irritably wonder what can have gone wrong.

In the case of disturbed children, for whom the world makes no sense and is terrifying, it is important to do nothing that will disturb them further and gradually to convince them that the world is not so hostile after all. And even where healthy children are concerned, the problem for society and their parents is to present them with an environment that they can trust, that is credible in itself and satisfies a child's growing need for a solid reality out there. What is wrong with prize-winners like *The Bronze Bow* or with Miss Frank's picture magazines is that they are deficient in reality, so deficient indeed that it requires an entire educational bureaucracy to talk the children into accepting them. One is encouraged by the extent to which the children are able to resist such persuasion and reject such products; but it is sad that the experts have given so little advice concerning alternatives, especially since so many parents and teachers must themselves be at a loss.

In the absence of viable alternatives, the children—who, as the experts proudly tell us, avidly read—buy more than 300,000,000 comic books a year, and nightly watch men and women die on television. Comics

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and television have, for the children, the dubious advantage of representing, however badly, their natural aggressiveness toward those elders whom they want both to destroy and become, a function previously fulfilled for them by the Brothers Grimm and by such representatives of adult authority as Mr. MacGregor who put Peter's father into a pie. But in the new version of *Peter Rabbit,* "specially edited in vocabulary and style to meet the needs of the young child," the pie is not mentioned and over Peter's bed is the sign "Good Bunnies Always Obey." Beatrix Potter's little masterpiece, language and all, has fallen apart in the hands of its modern adapter. Compare, for example, the original—

> First he ate some lettuces and some French beans; and then he ate some radishes;
> and then, feeling rather sick, he went to look for some parsley.

—with the new version:

> In the garden he saw carrots and beans and radishes.
> "Mmm," said Peter to himself, "Carrots, beans and radishes are what I like best."
> He began to eat.
> He ate some carrots.
> He ate some radishes.
> He ate and ate and ate.
> Peter ate so much he got sick.
> He went to look for some parsley.

The value of this inane performance is impossible to grasp. There is nothing old-fashioned or obscure about Miss Potter's version and there is nothing in the new version to make it clearer or more interesting than the original.* A little of it is likely to go a long way with even a slow child and none of it is likely to go anywhere at all with parents and teachers who agree with Professor Jerome Bruner of Harvard that, "We might ask as a criterion for any subject taught in primary school whether, when fully developed, it is worth an adult's knowing and whether having known it as a child makes a person a better adult. If the answer to both questions is negative or ambiguous, then the material is cluttering the curriculum."

Thanks to the theories of children's literature which this adaptation exemplifies, the comic book publishers can look forward to even bigger sales and the children will probably never go on to read the sequel in which Peter and his cousin, Benjamin Bunny, who in Miss Potter's original have no inhibiting signs over their beds, steal some onions and retrieve Peter's clothes from Mr. MacGregor's scarecrow. And they are nearly certain to miss *The Roly Poly Pudding,* which, according to Graham Greene, who has written the only mature essay on Miss Potter's achievement, is her best work.

To the extent that the children's book business is not an adjunct to modern educational theory, it is a branch of the toy industry; and those few enterprising publishers who manage to break out of the encirclement of the experts have found themselves, for better or worse, in the frantic, often insane, world of infantile mass merchandising, along with the producers of breakfast food, plastic rockets, and bubble gum. In this world the product is known for what it is—merchandise—and nearly everything depends upon the package. The merchandise either sells in quantity throughout the country in chain stores and supermarkets, five-and-tens, and department stores, or it is dropped and something new is tried that is more likely to sell in the mass market.

This is not to suggest that all merchandise juveniles are bad, any more than all breakfast food or bird seed is bad. But

* The pedagogical theory that is reflected by the repetition of words in this version of *Peter Rabbit* is that a child, in learning to read, has to encounter the same few words over and over again until he has mastered them: a perfectly sensible theory except that the modern adapter in this case has misapplied it and her version is so dull that it is hard to imagine that a child would want to read it at all, whereas the original is so lively that one can easily imagine a child's reading it over and over again and encountering, as according to the theory he should, the same set of words repeatedly.

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these books do tend, necessarily, to be pretty uniform. They must strike an average quality which precludes their ever being excellent, eccentric, or bold. The risks in this business are enormous and so are the profits, and until recently there has been little time for the prissy rationalizations of the children's book experts—except where the right educational endorsement might adapt the product to a school market and thus bring in an extra profit, or where some respectability is required to take advantage of the current nervousness among parents who want their children to be on the right cultural beam. In the world of merchandise juveniles the big factors are the production men who know how to shave a penny here and there, and the salesmen who are chosen for their aggressiveness and their ability to take a $100,000 order from a chain store or a mail-order house before the competitors do.

The books themselves often reflect the latest television success or the national current worry, whatever it may be; lately it has been science. Sometimes they are historical accounts, and these, since they frequently describe heroic actions in a more or less revolutionary spirit, are often pretty effective. Though they are of doubtful value as history, they do, at their best, represent the kind of courageous and spontaneous action that used to be found in more forthrightly imaginative literature. But in the stores one pile of merchandise looks pretty much like another and the clientele is presumed to be in a hurry and not very discriminating. Except for such rarities as the works of Dr. Seuss, who in his strange way is authentically a genius—a sort of supercharged Edward Lear—and whose books sell in the millions, most juveniles that are sold as merchandise can hardly be considered books at all. This is especially true of those specimens meant for children who are not yet able to read and which represent the bulk of merchandise juveniles. These products are really nursery fixtures made of paper.

Whereas the editors and publishers of books that are meant primarily for schools and libraries tend to be female, their counterparts in the merchandise lines are vigorously male, indistinguishable along Madison Avenue from their colleagues in advertising and TV, where Huckleberry Hound and Cape Canaveral are big business and where everything depends upon the package. And while the line followed by the children's specialists derives mainly from the intellectual debris of a generation or two ago—the progressivism, the liberalism, the "social consciousness" and uplift of the 30's survive surprisingly in a stale and mindless parody in the educational journals—the producers of merchandise follow the mass culture on a more day-to-day basis. This does not, however, mean that the books aimed at schools and libraries and those sold in the supermarkets are fundamentally different. Often they are interchangeable, depending only upon adjustments of format. And some of the more enterprising experts have begun to make room for some of the drearier merchandise products in their theories. It is better, they argue, for children to read nearly anything, even if "we" don't quite approve of it, than for them to read nothing at all—a rationalization which indicates an unlooked for area of agreement between the merchandisers and some of the experts. Both groups want to move the goods.

As the experts come more and more to work for the publishers, this area of agreement grows wider. And as the mass market gradually drifts away from the more obvious vulgarities of a generation ago toward the greater respectability of the new suburbs, and the shopping centers and the elementary schools which they create, it is an improvident merchandiser indeed who will fail to add an expert or two to his staff or to hire one to prepare modern editions of such books as *Peter Rabbit*.

The most nearly official expert publication intended for general consumption is *A Parent's Guide to Children's*

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Reading by Nancy Larrick, Ph.D., former President of the International Reading Association and "well known," according to the jacket, "as a writer and lecturer on children's reading." A wistful attempt on the part of publishers to promote the reading (i.e., the sale) of books, *A Parent's Guide* was sponsored by the National Book Committee, Inc. and prepared with the help of advisors from eighteen national organizations including the Adult Education Association, The American Association of University Women, the Campfire Girls, the Child Study Association of America, the Children's Book Council, The Children's Services Division of the American Library Association, The General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Not surprisingly, the *Guide* was awarded honorable mention in the competition for the Carey-Thomas Award, annually given (by the same people who offer the Newbery Medal) for the best example of creative publishing in America. We are dealing here with a rather small world. But for all these accolades it is difficult to find words that will describe Dr. Larrick's book, for it is not, in fact, a book at all but a sales-talk (Shall we read aloud to them? Yes, by all means! They love it!), and a far more aggressive one than Miss Frank's. The point of Dr. Larrick's exhortation is, as she says, to surround the children with books, a depressing enough thought given most of the books she has in mind, and especially when one thinks of those children, still in possession of their animal spirits, who may not feel like being surrounded by books or anything else. But books, Dr. Larrick insists—and so presumably do the eighteen national organizations who helped her—can be "fun," as much "fun," in fact, as TV or the comics. Yet if one thinks of one's own childhood experience, the idea that books have to be "fun" seems a little off center. Radio was fun and the comics were great fun and so, most of the time, was playing baseball or walking in the woods or watching the trains go by, but going to the library to read a book was not primarily or even secondarily for fun. It was for the sake of learning something, or more precisely, for the sake of becoming something—something more grown up than one had been before. The impulse to go to the library was of a completely different sort from the one that led to reading the comics or going to the movies, which were, after all, more fun. Going to the library was something one did, as it were, "for real," and the fantasies one managed to generate there among the books by Howard Pyle and George MacDonald, as one read them over and over, turned out in time to transform the idea of fun entirely. Through such books one acquired, without in the least knowing it at the time, a taste for reality and the holiness of the imagination operating at the far edges of human experience which, in later life, makes it so difficult to confront such performances as Dr. Larrick's with patience.

THE LAST forty-five pages of *A Parent's Guide* consist of lists of recommended titles, but from these lists "Some Old Favorites, such as *Tom Sawyer* and *Little Women,* have been omitted because hardly any parent needs a reminder. The list is largely made up of books published since 1940." But while Dr. Larrick feels that most parents know all about Mark Twain and such other writers whom she fails to mention as E. Nesbit, John Buchan, and George MacDonald, she apparently doesn't feel that they know about bookcases, and she therefore devotes two pages to describing what they are and how to build one. (This seems to be a gesture on behalf of an unhappy attempt made some years ago by the publishers when they asked a famous public relations man to suggest ways of improving their business. After some thought the public relations man suggested that householders should be encouraged to build bookshelves which they would then have to fill up.)

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One will not find on Dr. Larrick's forty-five page list books by H. G. Wells or Howard Pyle, Jonathan Swift or Herman Melville, Frances Hodgson Burnett or Jane Austen, and one wonders if perhaps what is implied in her principle of choice may not, after all, have come to pass. Perhaps by now the great tradition is lost to most children. Perhaps only a marginal few can usefully be introduced to such authors and perhaps it is merely old fashioned to care. One wonders if the professor of education who a year or two ago advised the high school in Princeton, New Jersey to get rid of "fossilized classics" like *Ivanhoe,* is not really marching forward with history while the rest of us have, like the classics themselves, become fossilized in our affection for a dead past.

BUT WHERE then do we draw the line? Do we slide all the way down to the new version of *Peter Rabbit* and those recent abridgements of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that have sacrificed everything to easy reading and are a waste of time to read, or to those colorful volumes which promise, in a hundred or so pages, to introduce the children to all the sciences known to man? Or do we stop halfway down and replace *Ivanhoe,* as the high school in Princeton has proposed to do, with *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck and Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea,* inferior works of their authors, but sexless and bloodless and therefore suitable? And if we set our standards at this level, how, when the children are older and go to college, will they deal with Shakespeare and Proust, and what will they do with a writer like Joyce? Shall we find a way to drag these writers down so that they too can be read on the level of *The Old Man and the Sea* or perhaps even of the new version of *Peter Rabbit*? The problem is sad to contemplate and hard, and it includes the danger that the children may not grow up at all but simply grow older. For the appreciation of literature resembles the process of growing up in that they both involve the discovery of distinctions between the self and the world: the aim of both is differentiation, concreteness, and the development of a character of one's own. This is why literature is exciting and why it is, finally, inseparable from life. Where Nancy Larrick goes wrong is in her assumption that there is no particular need to distinguish oneself from the surrounding environment, that to take part uncritically in the common culture is the proper goal of growing up.

Still, it would be wrong to suggest that the level on which Josette Frank and Nancy Larrick operate necessarily represents the style in which all children's libraries and school teachers or even most experts themselves function when they are face to face with children; and it would also be wrong to suggest that *The Bronze Bow* necessarily reflects the real literary preferences of these people. Life, even in the schools, is full of its usual perplexity and it is fair to assume that the stronger teachers consult their own experience and ideals, just as the weaker ones panic and submit, typically, to their own confusion. Though the experts on children's reading are, like experts everywhere, mistrustful of what they do not understand, a certain tough fiber occasionally appears in their otherwise undistinguished fabric. One of the recent Newbery winners is a book called *Frontier Living* by Edwin Tunis, which is a valuable and substantial account of daily life on the edge of the American wilderness as it gradually receded toward California. This book is not only full of uncommon information, but it is surprisingly candid. Unlike most books in its category, it neither patronizes nor sentimentalizes the Indians, whose side it takes against the whites where it is necessary to do so. The Kentucky settlers are described as drunken and brutal, while it is revealed that the towns farther west were often bothered by gamblers and prostitutes. The directors of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific are described as thieves and exploiters who cooperated with the California legislature to rob the public, while

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the United States Senate is shown to have been frequently faithless in its treaties with the Indians. In its attention to detail and the cleanliness of its style, *Frontier Living* is a considerable achievement—one of those books that is likely to inspire strong feelings of social justice and patriotism in certain young readers by providing them not only with a sense of their uniqueness but with a link to the common welfare.

One is surprised to discover that such a book was chosen by the same group who also chose *The Bronze Bow* and who are usually so careful not to offend against the standard impostures of American history. But this curious thread appears to run throughout the entire fabric of the children's book industry: while the formation of natural taste and the spontaneity and explosiveness associated with childhood are largely dampened by irrelevant theory, a certain stubbornness on behalf of real literature somehow prevails. Despite their omission from Nancy Larrick's list, the standard authors are likely to be available in most public libraries, even if, in some cases, only pro forma and even if the librarians, under pressure from the schools and knowing that their budgets in some cases depend on how many books they can circulate, feature the newer books that are easier to read. Most libraries too will include the handful of modern books like Hugh Lofting's *Dr. Doolittle,* Kenneth Graham's *The Wind in the Willows,* Mary Norton's *The Borrowers,* Laura Ingalls Wilder's *The Little House in the Big Woods,* and the works of Dr. Seuss—books which even Dr. Larrick finds room for and which, though they represent a sort of mannerist phase of the great tradition, are generally on a very high level. The libraries themselves are frequently stimulating and their collections and personnel are impressive. To visit the Donnell Library on Fifty-third Street in New York or the Children's Room of the New York Public Library is reassuring. The mindless eclecticism, the idea that children should know less and less about more and more, that characterize the writing of such experts as we have quoted here, are absent. Absent too is the notion that the books should be adjusted to the tempers and interests of the children, which is what is implied by the idea that books "should meet the reading needs of the young child"—an idea that would, if fully carried into practice, reduce the children to idiocy and turn the libraries into madhouses.

BUT IF the official experts are in practice largely ignored by superior librarians, how are teachers and librarians who may not be as good as those in the Donnell to know what books to make available? It is, after all, no easier to distinguish quality among children's books than among books in general: the same critical acumen is required in either case and such acumen has never been especially abundant in any society. The criterion generally applied by the experts is: "Is this a book for children?" But the only relevant question—and the one which, to judge by their typical preferences, the experts are incompetent to decide—is: "Is this a book at all?" The question: "Is this a book for children?" can properly be decided only by the children themselves as they fumble and experiment among what is available. And if a child decides, as one sixth-grader whom I know of has, to read the Greek tragedies, then Greek tragedy is, for him, a suitable book. If it bores and confuses him, he will soon enough turn to something that suits him better.

We have been considering not the more or less technical problem of teaching the children to read—which is properly a branch of cognitive psychology and is within the province of qualified experts—but of helping them to find and distinguish, once they have learned how to read, those books through which they can discover themselves as individuals and discern, gradually, the nature of the world in which they must function. "Children read, through inexperience, whatever comes their way," Lillian Smith, who was a

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Canadian librarian, has written in her admirable book, *The Unreluctant Years,* published by the American Library Association. "In a time when children's books are almost a matter of mass production," Miss Smith goes on, "it is possible that a child may pass from infancy to maturity without encountering one book that will satisfy him in his search for experience and pleasure; that will offer him reality in the place of a shadow of reality." But, she adds, "children will defend themselves against encroaching mediocrity if books of genuine quality are put within their reach."

Thus stated, the task of teachers and librarians and the experts who advise them is simple. It has nothing to do with "being alert to all that goes on within a child's world," or with "surrounding him with books," or with meeting "the reading needs of the young child." For it is absurd to suppose that the "reading needs" of a child who is able to read by himself are, in principle, different from those of an adult, or that a child will or should submit to being surrounded by walls of books, or that alertness to the private world of childhood is a valuable or even possible desideratum. Proposals like these are useless in themselves and serve only to rationalize and certify the industry begun by John Newbery who, significantly, sold in his shop not only books for children but quack medicines for their parents.

As the market grows larger and the rate at which new books published for children expands, and as the standards proposed by the bureaucracy of experts increasingly conform to the surrounding mass culture and the commercial requirements of the publishers, the opportunity for children to find "books of genuine quality" will necessarily diminish. In America there are hardly more than a hundred—certainly no more than two hundred—bookstores which are able to select and carry more than a bare minimum of the standard children's classics or which can by themselves distinguish among the new books published each year those that are of any value. And the number of such stores is decreasing as more and more of them come to depend for their profits on merchandise and as the schools and libraries, in their attempt "to meet the reading needs" of the young child, increasingly make the children unfit for the "fossilized classics."

Though the children themselves wrote letters strongly rejecting the proposed modification in the curriculum of the Princeton High School when it appeared in the New York *Times,* the teachers grow weary. Dickens and Scott are, after all, harder to teach than low-grade Hemingway: for many teachers they may by now be impossible; and the community, except for an unimportant fraction, no longer cares very much. Perhaps, as Edgar Z. Friedenberg recently suggested in these pages,* the teachers have even come to resent the brightness of their students, for as Professor Friedenberg argues, the "free-floating ill temper" so common throughout our society is particularly endemic among those people who, defeated like so many others by the conditions of American life, must nevertheless confront the abounding and as yet uncompromised energies of the young. And so the marvelous world of George MacDonald and Conan Doyle, John Buchan and Frances Hodgson Burnett may soon vanish, except for the happy few. Perhaps, since so much else has gone —and will go—it is pointless to care. Except, of course, that the children are always there to remind us. And one naturally wonders what they will become.

* "The Gifted Student and His Enemies," May 1962.

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H. STUART HUGHES

ON BEING A CANDIDATE

I FIND it difficult to believe that only three months ago I was a candidate for major office. Hardly a week after the election the experience had begun to transmute itself into a curious chapter of existence, isolated by its very strangeness, and acquiring an aura of sentiment and legend rather like military service in wartime. It seems almost incredible today that I—and hundreds of others—should have devoted eight months of our lives to a venture whose chances were slim from the start and whose electoral results were, to say the least, both perplexing and disappointing. Yet if I ask myself whether it was worth the effort, the answer is clear—I cannot imagine myself having done otherwise. And my co-workers apparently feel the same way. Many of them seem willing, even eager, to do it again.

Here is a paradox worth pondering. Why did we do it? And—as so often in history, large or small—if I conscientiously try to recapture how it happened, the why will emerge as well. I do not want to argue the case once again, to rehash the polemics of the campaign itself. I am tired of that. I want rather to suggest what the venture meant in human terms to me and to those who worked with me—and beyond that, as a historian who also at long intervals has participated on the margin of great events, to see where this experience fits into the broader history of ideological change in our time.

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* * *

It all started at a lunch in late February of 1962 with two or three workers in what is loosely called the "peace movement." One asked me what I thought should be the main thrust of their effort in this election year. I answered, casually, that we might try the experiment of senatorial candidacies in perhaps ten key states. "That's a funny coincidence," came the reply. "I was just about to ask you to run for the Senate from Massachusetts." So there it was: I had been trapped in my own rhetoric. Yet something in me responded to the prospect with excitement and even delight.

Or, to put it another way, if I hadn't consented, someone else would have had to make the try. Somebody needed to take advantage of a wide-open situation that seemed the opportunity of the decade and that might not recur for a decade more. It was the President's own state, and the final two years of the President's own Senate seat were at stake; the President's younger brother was already announced as one of the contestants, and national and international attention was already beginning to focus on what was billed as an epoch-making battle of Massachusetts clans. There was no incumbent, no personally outstanding candidate; previous experience suggested that an outsider stood

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a better chance in a mid-term election than when a presidential contest polarized the whole national vote. Of course there was no realistic possibility of getting elected. But there *was* a chance to challenge the bipartisan consensus in a highly "visible" campaign and to lift that campaign itself above the level of a local clan battle by redirecting it toward debate on the life-and-death issues of the nuclear age.

The first lunch was followed by three long Sunday-night meetings at my own house. The group started with about ten people and increased to a crowded roomful—with drinks on the house, which, by both principle and necessity, became my only personal financial contribution to the campaign. Our first decision was our hardest: should I try to enter the Democratic primary or to go it alone as an Independent? I held out for the latter course—it seemed pointless to get crushed in the middle of the all-Irish struggle between the palace guard of Teddy Kennedy and the more authentic following of Eddie McCormack—and eventually the rest of the group agreed. Moreover (and here the event was to prove us right), we knew that Massachusetts was a politically heterogeneous state, full of dissident and "alienated" voters, nearly half of them registered with neither major party, and with a tenacious tradition of ticket-splitting and cross-voting; under the circumstances, for a maverick to wear a party label might actually be a disadvantage.

By late March we were ready to "announce." Summoning together the shreds of political experience a few of us possessed, we had rented a room and called a press conference at the Beacon Hill hotel, more commonly known as the locale of shady deals among members of the Great and General Court. We had no idea how many would come: we were sure only of the reporter from the Harvard *Crimson*. When I walked in, the whole Boston press was there, and two television cameras were staring at me. Unquestionably we were in business: that night the news was all over the state, and during the next few days my phone was ringing constantly.

According to Massachusetts law, an independent candidate running for statewide office had to collect upwards of 72,000 signatures—3 per cent of the last vote for governor—in order to win a place on the ballot. The total was prohibitive: this was the unanimous opinion of the press and the politicos, and nobody in fact had tried to reach it since the law had first been passed. To challenge this rooted conviction already made our venture unique; it turned my candidacy into the sort of sporting event that the press could appreciate and understand. Indeed, if the signature requirement had not existed, we would have had to invent something else to perform the same function. For the law obliged us to organize our forces early: it dictated an urgent call for recruits and gave these volunteers something clear and tangible to do. Without it, my candidacy might never have been more than drawing-room gossip in the neighborhood of Harvard Square.

The ten-week signature campaign—running from mid-May to late July—appears in retrospect as the most successful part of our whole venture. It was directed by a young city planner who picked the local coordinators, assigned each town its signature quota, and prepared detailed instructions on how to use voting lists systematically to check the validity of signatures. My job was simply to speak, night after night, each evening in a different town, to audiences ranging from twenty to a hundred. After the talk there would always be a question period, which I considered the most important part of the evening and which sometimes went on as long as two hours. It was only after I had done my best to satisfy every questioner, after I had resolved every possible doubt or hesitation, that one of my co-workers would call for volunteers. To my recollection this total never fell lower than a quar-

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ter of those present in the meeting-hall.

Our original—and permanent—center of strength lay along the arc of educated, prosperous suburbia running from near-urban Brookline and Cambridge through Newton, Lexington, and Lincoln to ex-urban Weston and Wayland. Here liberal-minded middle-class housewives did most of the work. Farther out in the state the forces were thinner—with pockets of strength in such predictable places as the Berkshires, Cape Cod, and the college-studded Connecticut Valley. In the large industrial towns the number of local recruits was pitifully inadequate to meet the signature quotas, which had been assigned on the basis of population. By necessity, then, we called on help from the outside. And this could come only from the flying squadron of about fifty college and graduate students who, with final examinations passed, were enrolled from all over inside the state and out, to give their full summer to the campaign. During the week these boys and girls—the "kids," as they were called, both in praise and blame*—worked over Boston housing developments; on week-ends they would "blitz" some desolate mill town or the great central cities like Worcester and Springfield.

The kids gave me a sense of picking up again where I had left off when I graduated from Amherst College a quarter of a century ago. Their radicalism had about it the same freshness that I recalled from my own college days. In contrast to the sophistication and complexity of 1930's ideology at Harvard or the New York City colleges, my own ideals had been simple and non-sectarian. The trinity of peace, racial equality, and socialism just about exhausted them. Communism seemed remote, probably brutal, and mostly irrelevant. Of course a more complicated and troubling series of experiences had taken over later: a full-scale initiation as an intelligence officer into the jungle of European politics; the searing lesson of the Wallace campaign in 1948; lying low in the McCarthy years while quietly doing my bit to rebuild the Democratic party in California. All this experience proved helpful when I finally decided to become a candidate myself. More particularly I was on the alert not to fall into the trap of Communist involvement that had discredited and disillusioned so many people in 1948; since mine was the first such effort for a decade and a half, it inevitably invited comparisons.

To my young supporters—this was a difficulty between us—the Communist danger was never quite as real as it necessarily was for my own generation. I remember shouting at them one night: "If you kids don't shut up, you'll force me to give an anti-Communist speech"— a most effective way of getting silence. In fact, I never had to make such a speech. A mere reference usually sufficed or, if I suspected fellow-traveling in the hall, a blast about what happened in Hungary in 1956.

The occasion for my outburst at the students was a series of meetings held at my house in midsummer to hammer out a platform. Disorderly discussion proceeded for five hours at a stretch, but in the end we produced a good platform: even today, I would change scarcely a word of it.

On the foreign scene, it was moderation itself: following a call for increased understanding toward the neutral world and a strengthening of the United Nations, it advanced no more than a minimum program on disarmament. Indeed, it hardly spoke of real disarmament at all, concentrating on the preparatory "tension-reducing and confidence-building initiatives" that we had cribbed from such "gradualist" writers as Charles Osgood and Amitai Etzioni. On the domestic scene, the tone was more radical. It was not socialist—although I never made any secret of my socialist sympathies, while explaining (usu-

* Hostile journalists sometimes described them as beatniks, but they were, if anything, over-serious. There was scarcely a smoker among them, or a drinker, and they were devoted, enthusiastic, and energetic. Certainly without them the signature total would never have been met.

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ally to no avail) that the term was merely confusing in an American context. The domestic program was rather of a militant welfare-state variety, with a strong emphasis on the rights of Negroes and of labor. The latter in particular provoked rumbles of discontent in the suburbs. And I myself was far from happy with the way in which certain proposals like the 35-hour week and a $1.50 minimum wage became reduced to slogans. Nor did I find the time and mental energy, as the campaign gained in intensity, to think through the relation of these estimable reforms to the new competition from the Common Market.

Right down to November a central ambiguity remained. It was quite apparent to those who knew me well or could catch the emotional drift of my speeches that my personal position went beyond the "official" line in my platform. People had only to read my latest book to see that I was actually closer to "unilateralism" in nuclear policy—once again the word was sloganized in a negative sense—than my campaign stand might suggest. On domestic issues the problem was less perplexing: here I could explain that I was not engaging in demagogy to catch the labor vote but was simply holding true to convictions of thirty years' standing. In the matter of nuclear weapons, however, the visceral revulsion that I shared with "the kids"—and, incidentally, with the militant ladies of the suburbs and the college towns—constantly threatened to disrupt our careful formulas of moderation. The ethic of ultimate ends and the ethic of responsibility, as Max Weber would put it, were always in danger of flying apart.

In the meantime we had had our day of triumph and our week of high comedy at the State House. When the signature deadline came around, we had collected 149,000—more than twice the number required—and 80 per cent had been validated by the local town clerks. I think this was something of a record in modern American politics. At least such was the opinion of the Boston press, when on the last day of July we mounted the steps of Bulfinch's historic building to turn in the bulging piles of electoral petitions.

During the next few days we had our first experience of big headlines and sustained press interest. The other candidates had the right to challenge my signatures if they so desired, and a well-known handwriting expert, a certain Mrs. McCarthy, began to labor in the bowels of the State House, scrutinizing each signature in turn. It was quite apparent—although nobody said so—that she was in the employ of the youngest Kennedy. But who was the other expert, the mysterious gentleman from New York, who sat across from her at the table piled high with petitions? The press was baffled: neither Lodge nor McCormack seemed inclined to challenge. So far as I know, no one guessed the truth—that my friends had by now learned the subtler arts of Massachusetts politics, and that the stranger from out of state had actually been hired by my own lawyer to check on the shenanigans of Mrs. McCarthy. In the end the poor lady gave up: even with the best will in the world, she could hardly have found 45,000 forgeries! My signatures passed through unchallenged.

It was August now. The housewives of the suburbs scattered to the Cape or Martha's Vineyard. The students, who refused to take a rest, fanned out across the state to begin cultivating the grass roots. I beat the summer cocktail circuit for campaign funds and snatched what relaxation I could with my family at Wellfleet. By Labor Day we were back at the job. But somehow it was a different campaign we returned to—bigger, more "respectable," more self-confident. The first sign of the change came on Labor Day itself, when at a rather dreary union dance, I found myself holed up in the bar with two of labor's top influentials, whose well-oiled friendliness gave promise of better things to come.

During the last two weeks of September

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and the first three of October everything seemed to be breaking right. I had finally acquired an efficient manager—a businessman (a rare bird in this sort of venture), who simply took two months' leave from his regular pursuits and turned his energies to the Sisyphean task of bringing a minimum of order into my chaotic campaign headquarters. On September 18, the party primaries thinned the field of contestants; the voters said goodbye to Eddie McCormack—the Speaker's nephew and Teddy's rival. With the candidates now reduced to three, new support began to pour in from all over: steady local workers who fell into none of the earlier stereotypes of housewives, students, or intellectuals; dozens of Protestant clergymen and rabbis (although I was an announced agnostic); hundreds of physicians (despite the fact that I had called the American Medical Association a "ruthless lobby"); and scientists and professors beyond number.

This was the time when I began to visit factories; when I received a rousing welcome from the state convention of the AFL-CIO; when I engaged in two television debates with the Republican candidate, George Cabot Lodge, which, by general assent, established a new level in American politics by the free-flowing and courteous nature of the exchange and the way in which a single issue was consecutively pursued at each encounter. This was also the period when the money began to roll in. It came mostly in small or medium sums, checks ranging in size from five to a hundred dollars, with only a very few contributors reaching the legal limit of three thousand. It arrived from all over the country and even from abroad; one money order came from as far away as Nigeria. In the end we collected $150,000—again, I think, something of a record. And we also broke political precedent in balancing our accounts: no campaign deficit is currently troubling my sleep.

Of all the fund-raising devices that my financial committee cooked up, by far the most rewarding were the cultural events we sponsored in Boston and its suburbs. We held an art auction: the painters and musicians and writers responded with offerings, and the evening's take was $10,000—although hundreds of potential buyers had to be turned away as the hall grew unbearably stuffy and the police invoked the fire laws. We also held chamber music concerts, for which members of the Boston Symphony donated their services. The music was superb and the attendance distinguished—almost like rallies of the local gentry. At one of them I gave what by general account was my best speech of the whole campaign. I spoke from a mood of infinite weariness in a quiet voice worn by over-use. Perhaps true to character, the speech was scarcely political at all—a few reminiscences and reflections on the meaning of music in an apocalyptic era. My friends told me that I was speaking better these days than I had in the spring. The power to find the words that went to the hearts of others came upon me more often—the inexplicable grace of the *hwyl*, as my Welsh ancestors termed it.

As the third week of October drew to its close, I recall thinking that had the campaign ended right then, the job would have been done. We scarcely needed to go through to the election. We had succeeded beyond our wildest anticipations. I had been taken seriously as an equal candidate; the press coverage had been good; minds had been opened. I had prodded the other candidates—more particularly Lodge and McCormack—to talk about *my* issues. In brief, I had made my point. And I was very tired. Why couldn't we just shut up shop and go home?

THEN CAME Cuba. I heard the President's crisis speech over a flickering car radio winding through the Berkshires on my way to Williamstown. An hour later I was on my feet addressing a packed hall of undergraduates and townspeople. I spoke extemporaneously, with only the few notes I had scribbled in the car. I recall speaking slowly, even more precisely

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than usual, and a friend told me later that my eyes were glassy and strained. Perhaps I was too solemn. But I suspected that I might be the only person in the country who was both ready to speak out and in a position to be heard. I also knew that I might be "blowing" my whole candidacy.

"If I did not answer the President at this point, I would not be true to what I set out to do in this campaign." Such was the burden of my remarks. I did not say that the President was entirely wrong. I said rather that he had acted over-hastily in imposing the blockade, that he had bypassed the United Nations, that he had unnecessarily stirred up an atmosphere of national emergency. I still believe these things. I also thought then and think now that the installation of Soviet missiles in Cuba, while it altered the military balance somewhat, did not change it nearly as decisively as the official American spokesmen claimed. Indeed, one of my main points all along had been that there was no such thing as a balance, that the nuclear situation was inherently unstable and hence intolerably dangerous. It was up to my country, I argued, to take the initiative in substituting international action for power plays (such as the one the Soviet Union had just pulled off in Cuba) on the part of rival military blocs.

Quite obviously, the bulk of the American people—and of the Massachusetts electorate—would have none of this line of reasoning. *In the short run,* the event seemed to prove the President right. In one sense the Cuban crisis increased the "visibility" of my candidacy. It drew attention to a position that now looked even more heretical than before, and for the rest of the crisis week I spoke to audiences swollen by a mixture of indignation and curiosity. But these happened to be in the major academic centers. Elsewhere my support appeared to be melting away. A manic-depressive cycle seized a number of my co-workers. My own schedule was already crowded to bursting, and the sudden onset of the Cuban crisis disrupted it completely. During the last two weeks of the campaign I had no time to think, to prepare my speeches, to regroup my forces. I lost control of my own campaign, as events and people rushed dizzily by me. In my memory, the fifteen days from the beginning of the emergency to the election figure as little more than a weary blur.

YET IT WOULD be wrong to use "Cuba"—the single word condenses a whole complex phenomenon, as in the case of its opposite number, "Munich"—as a universal alibi. Most impartial commentators thought that it cut my vote at least in half. Perhaps it did—no one will ever know for sure. What to my mind it did rather more was to underline a cruel truth which had been present from the start but to which my friends and I had refused to pay sufficient attention. Even in its best days my campaign had had an air of unreality. I might shine on television. I might reduce my opponents' arguments to rubble. Teddy Kennedy's consistent refusal to debate me might be—and was—interpreted as a tribute to my forensic skill. There was even the suspicion that the series of encounters with Lodge had been cut short after two debates because in the second one I had pushed him too hard. But all of this did no good. Teddy's crushing victory over McCormack in the Democratic primary had proved the impossibility of my votes' tipping the balance to the Republicans. After mid-September every Massachusetts citizen with a minimum of political savvy knew who was going to win the election.

While I was delighting the intellectual elite at genteel evening gatherings, Teddy was outdoors in the mill towns pulling in the mass vote. When I tried to do the same, the result was usually an embarrassing fiasco. After beating the bushes throughout the state, Teddy could collect only a pitiful handful of professors to endorse him; mine were so numerous that we never even tried to count them. He and I were running two totally different kinds of campaigns that never met—except on

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the rare and stiff occasions when Teddy's managers in some way fouled things up and we suddenly found ourselves on the same platform. Meantime Lodge shuttled rather unhappily between these incompatible models. Obviously Teddy had it "made." When my supporters would indignantly inquire why the President's brother refused to debate me, I was tempted to answer—and sometimes did—"Why should he?"

AFTER ALL this, election day came almost as a deliverance. The Sunday before, I had already noticed that I was "disengaging," that I was thinking of my campaign in the past tense. The result is now a matter of record—a paltry 50,000 votes, 2 per cent of the total cast.

All our wooing of labor proved fruitless; the mill towns produced only a scattering of votes. There was a slightly better response in strongly Negro areas. The Italo-Americans, whom I had repeatedly addressed in their own language, had been glad to listen—but voting for me seemed to be quite a different matter. Such, indeed, was the central lesson of the whole campaign. Outside the liberal suburbs and the college towns, Beacon Hill and the Berkshires, my candidacy never quite became real. For the average citizen to vote for a man who stood no chance of election was just too far beyond the sphere of normal ideas. The answer, some of my co-workers argued, was to make a bold claim that I *could* win. But this struck me as plain idiotic—an offense against simple truth and common sense. Perhaps here, as at other points in the campaign, I displayed too much of an intellectual's fastidiousness. I twisted and dodged and finally took refuge in the formula that since one miracle had already occurred in the signature campaign, why couldn't we pull off another?

As I walked down factory assembly lines, the workers had greeted me with friendly curiosity. This at least had occurred in the true working-class, blue-collar departments—among clerical employees things were invariably stickier—thereby giving unexpected confirmation to a romantic notion of the working class that I thought I had long since outgrown. But again, sympathy was not the same thing as a vote. It was rather a recognition from decent people who had a tough job to do that I was temporarily in the same condition. Many of them seemed to have only the foggiest idea of who I was and what I was running for. I recall one worker who heard with utter incredulity the news that I was opposing Kennedy and Lodge for the Senate seat. The dazed expression on his face seemed to say: "And what tall story will you be telling me next?" I also recall a more cheerful occasion—a garment-workers' dance at New Bedford—when a young garment worker, her opulent figure enveloped in a knitted dress, offered to introduce me around the room. To each friend in turn she whispered the magic words, "You know, dollar-fifty and thirty-five hours," as though it were a very special kind of secret. I caught the same look of incredulity, this time mingled with delight, on the face of the old and toothless woman whose hand I happened to be shaking. It was as though she had suddenly been offered a box of candy; I might be a Santa Claus—but I was not a very real one.

No wonder I had begun to ask myself whether it was worth it—the endless round of blighted cities, the desolate barking into a microphone on wind-swept corners, the futile coffee hours with the hostess wringing her hands and explaining in tones of pathos how three-quarters of those who had promised to come had simply failed to show. (I soon learned that in politics the usual rules of behavior no longer hold, that customarily polite people feel free to lie like troupers.) There was so much that was unspeakably dull, so much that was irritating beyond belief—the anguished telephone calls, the bright ideas that really were no good at all, above all, the bores who trapped me in corners with

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interminable questions to which I had already given the answer eighteen times. I can see myself now, leaning wearily against the wall and nodding, "Yes, yes, yes" with glazed eye and vacant smile to someone whom in ordinary life I would not have tolerated for two minutes. These —far more than the celebrated matter of political "courage"—were the true trials of campaigning.

I remember thinking that the whole venture came to an end just in time to save me from some threatened deterioration of personality. By the end of October I was barely managing to survive on brandy and seconal—it was not until Christmas time that I realized how tired I actually was. People commiserated with me for having to continue my teaching at the very height of the campaign. But this in fact proved a godsend; what had started as a financial and professional necessity became another technique for survival, which I exploited to the full by invariably giving precedence to my academic commitments and by keeping separate with pedantic rigor the two realms of my being. Yet even this division of existence did not suffice to maintain sanity. In the end I was reduced to stratagems for outwitting my own campaign headquarters. Now and then I alleged a prior commitment that had only a shadowy existence. One blessed afternoon I simply vanished without trace into the fastnesses of central Massachusetts.

STILL IT was worth it. It was a great adventure, for me, and I think also for the nearly three thousand people who at one time or another worked for the campaign. This total in itself was noteworthy: I believe it was the largest amateur organization put together in recent American political history. It was also one of the most devoted and one of the most united. For the first time since the 1930's the whole of the liberal dissenting constituency found itself together under one tent.

Along the way we had demolished a number of myths. We proved that American politics—even in as rough a state as Massachusetts—can be far more decent than it is popularly supposed to be; I was constantly amazed at the courtesy and respect I encountered nearly everywhere. Nobody called us Communists: the charge would have been too absurd. The worst that happened was a post-Cuba cartoon showing me with a Chamberlain-type umbrella in the guise of an appeaser. We proved that it was possible to speak out on the prickliest of issues—China policy, world government, even birth control—and to be heard with attentive interest by people who had not the remotest intention of voting for me. Very few Catholics supported me; but the rest did not denounce me as an Anti-Christ. If further proof were needed, we unquestionably demonstrated that the spirit of Joseph McCarthy no longer overshadowed this most Catholic state. We exposed the utter impotence of the John Birch Society and the radical right. Time and again I was warned that rightist hecklers were going to break up one of my meetings. The highest total the hecklers ever reached was fourteen, and on the rare occasions when they did appear, they soon collapsed in discouragement.

As I came to know my following better, I began to understand that for years they had been waiting for this sort of campaign. They longed to challenge the consensus, to question the basic assumptions by which their fellow-citizens lived. Throughout the 1950's they had quietly gone about their business, behaving as their neighbors did, swallowing down their anger and their fear for their children. For a whole decade the tension of self-contained protest had been building up. Then came the words they had been waiting for. At last, at last *some*body was saying in public what they had thought in the privacy of their own consciences or quietly discussed in small meetings of like-minded people. The result was an emotional explosion—a happy, a peaceful explosion, but an explosion nonetheless.

Perhaps that is how dissenting politics

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has to be conducted in an advanced democracy in the third quarter of the 20th century. In European countries the situation is much the same. There also the vocal minority is small. The intellectual gadfly parties muster no more than 2 or 3 per cent of the vote. There also the reserves of radicalism are more and more found not among the workers, but in the educated middle class. The bulk of the population remains unmoved; prosperity and "the deterrent" have become the twin opiates of contemporary society. Spirits are lulled by the monotonous chatter over the airwaves. But if a different note is struck, then there is at least a chance that people will prick up their ears and take notice.

Such is the main point of a campaign like mine. I always thought of it as a trial run, a precursor of larger things to come. And these things, I believe, could well take place in a totally different framework and with a new cast of characters. I do not think my candidacy either set a precedent or requires repetition. I do think that the situation *in Massachusetts in 1962* called for such an effort. The great advantage of a political candidacy over mere speaking and writing is that one is obliged to put one's own person on the line, tangibly and visibly. It suggests that if the candidate and his friends are willing to go to all *that* trouble—and with no chance of electoral reward—they must mean what they say. In the simplest terms, this is what we set out to do last spring. We were trying to impress on the minds of our fellow-citizens that for a minority of people in one key state of the union the issue of human survival was worth an extraordinary commitment of time and energy. And that I think we accomplished.

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ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

TAIBELE AND HURMIZAH

A Story

IN THE town of Lashnik, not far from Lublin, there lived a man and his wife. His name was Chaim Nossen, hers—Taibele. They had no children. Not that the marriage was barren; Taibele had borne her husband a son and two daughters, but all three had died in infancy—one of whooping cough, one of scarlet fever, and one of diphtheria. After that Taibele's womb closed up, and nothing availed: neither prayers, nor spells, nor potions. Grief drove Chaim Nossen to withdraw from the world. He kept apart from his wife, stopped eating meat, and no longer slept at home, but on a bench in the prayer house. Taibele owned a dry-goods store, inherited from her parents, and she sat there all day, with a yardstick on her right, a pair of shears on her left, and the Women's Prayer Book in Yiddish in front of her. Chaim Nossen, tall, lean, with black eyes and a wedge of a beard, had always been a morose, silent man even at the best of times. Taibele was small and fair, with blue eyes and a round face. Although punished by the Almighty, she still smiled easily, the dimples playing on her cheeks. She had no one else to cook for now, but she lit the stove or the tripod every day and cooked some porridge or soup for herself. She also went on with her knitting—now a pair of stockings, now a vest; or else she would embroider something on canvas. It wasn't in her nature to rail at fate or cling to sorrow.

One day Chaim Nossen put his prayer shawl and phylacteries, a change of underwear, and a loaf of bread into a sack and left the house. Neighbors asked where he was going; he answered: "Wherever my eyes lead me."

When people told Taibele that her husband had left her, it was too late to catch up with him. He was already across the river. It was discovered that he had hired a cart to take him to Lublin. Taibele sent a messenger to seek him out, but neither her husband nor the messenger was ever seen again. At thirty-three, Taibele found herself a deserted wife.

After a period of searching, she realized that she had nothing more to hope for. God had taken both her children and her husband. She would never be able to marry again; from now on she would have to live alone. All she had left was her house, her store, and her belongings. The townspeople pitied her, for she was a quiet woman, kind-hearted and honest in her business dealings. Everyone asked: how did she deserve such misfortunes? But God's ways are hidden from man.

Taibele had several friends among the town matrons whom she had known since childhood. In the daytime housewives are busy with their pots and pans, but in the evening Taibele's friends often dropped in for a chat. In the summer, they would sit

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER's last previous appearance in these pages was with his story, "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy," in our September 1962 number. Mr. Singer's most recent novel is *The Slave*. The present story was translated from the Yiddish by Mirra Ginsburg.

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on a bench outside the house, gossiping and telling each other stories.

One moonless summer evening when the town was as dark as Egypt, Taibele sat with her friends on the bench, telling them a tale she had read in a book bought from a peddler. It was about a young Jewish woman, and a demon who had ravished her and lived with her as man and wife. Taibele recounted the story in all its details. The women huddled closer together, joined hands, spat to ward off evil, and laughed the kind of laughter that comes from fear. One of them asked:

"Why didn't she exorcise him with an amulet?"

"Not every demon is frightened of amulets," answered Taibele.

"Why didn't she make a journey to a Holy Rabbi?"

"The demon warned her that he would choke her if she revealed the secret."

"Woe is me, may the Lord protect us, may no one know of such things!" a woman cried out.

"I'll be afraid to go home now," said another.

"I'll walk with you," a third one promised.

While they were talking, Alchonon, the teacher's helper who hoped one day to become a wedding jester, happened to be passing by. Alchonon, five years a widower, had the reputation of being a wag and a prankster, a man with a screw loose. His steps were silent because the soles of his shoes were worn through and he walked on his bare feet. When he heard Taibele telling the story, he halted to listen. The darkness was so thick, and the women so engrossed in the weird tale, that they did not see him. This Alchonon was a dissipated fellow, full of cunning goatish tricks. On the instant, he formed a mischievous plan.

After the women had gone, Alchonon stole into Taibele's yard. He hid behind a tree and watched through the window. When he saw Taibele go to bed and put out the candle, he slipped into the house. Taibele had not bolted the door; thieves were unheard of in that town. In the hallway, he took off his shabby caftan, his fringed garment, his trousers, and stood as naked as his mother bore him. Then he tiptoed to Taibele's bed. She was almost asleep, when suddenly she saw a figure looming in the dark. She was too terrified to utter a sound.

"Who is it?" she whispered, trembling. Alchonon replied in a hollow voice:

"Don't scream, Taibele. If you cry out, I will destroy you. I am the demon Hurmizah, ruler over darkness, rain, hail, thunder, and wild beasts. I am the evil spirit who espoused the young woman you spoke about tonight. And because you told the story with such relish, I heard your words from the abyss and was filled with lust for your body. Do not try to resist, for I drag away those who refuse to do my will beyond the Mountains of Darkness—to Mount Sair, into a wilderness where man's foot is unknown, where no beast dares to tread, where the earth is of iron and the sky of copper. And I roll them in thorns and in fire, among adders and scorpions, until every bone of their body is ground to dust, and they are lost for eternity in the nether depths. But if you comply with my wish, not a hair of your head will be harmed, and I will send you success in every undertaking. . . ."

Hearing these words, Taibele lay motionless as in a swoon. Her heart fluttered and seemed to stop. She thought her end had come. After a while, she gathered courage and murmured:

"What do you want of me? I am a married woman!"

"Your husband is dead. I followed in his funeral procession myself." The voice of the teacher's helper boomed out. "It is true that I cannot go to the Rabbi to testify and free you to remarry, for the Rabbis don't believe our kind. Besides, I don't dare step across the threshold of the Rabbi's chamber—I fear the Holy Scrolls. But I am not lying. Your husband died in

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an epidemic, and the worms have already gnawed away his nose. And even were he alive, you would not be forbidden to lie with me, for the laws of the *Shulhan Aruch* do not apply to us."

Hurmizah the teacher's helper went on with his persuasions, some sweet, some threatening. He invoked the names of angels and devils, of demonic beasts and of vampires. He swore that Asmodeus, King of the Demons, was his step-uncle. He said that Lilith, Queen of the Evil Spirits, danced for him on one foot and did every manner of thing to please him. Shibtah, the she-devil who stole babies from women in childbed, baked poppy-seed cakes for him in Hell's ovens and leavened them with the fat of wizards and black dogs. He argued so long, adducing such witty parables and proverbs, that Taibele was finally obliged to smile, in her extremity. Hurmizah vowed that he had loved Taibele for a long time. He described to her the dresses and shawls she had worn that year and the year before; he told her the secret thoughts that came to her as she kneaded dough, prepared her Sabbath meal, washed herself in the bath, and saw to her needs at the outhouse. He also reminded her of the morning when she had wakened with a black and blue mark on her breast. She had thought it was the pinch of a ghoul. But it was really the mark left by a kiss of Hurmizah's lips, he said.

After a while, the demon got into Taibele's bed and had his will of her. He told her that from then on he would visit her twice a week, on Wednesdays and on Sabbath evenings, for those were the nights when the unholy ones were abroad in the world. He warned her, though, not to divulge to anyone what had befallen her, or even hint at it, on pain of dire punishment: he would pluck out the hair from her skull, pierce her eyes, and bite out her navel. He would cast her into a desolate wilderness where bread was dung and water was blood, and where the wailing of Zalmaveth was heard all day and all night. He commanded Taibele to swear by the bones of her mother that she would keep the secret to her last day. Taibele saw that there was no escape for her. She put her hand on his thigh and swore an oath, and did all that the monster bade her.

Before Hurmizah left, he kissed her long and lustfully, and since he was a demon and not a man, Taibele returned his kisses and moistened his beard with her tears. Evil spirit though he was, he had treated her kindly. . . .

When Hurmizah was gone, Taibele sobbed into her pillow until sunrise.

Hurmizah came every Wednesday night and every Sabbath night. Taibele was afraid that she might find herself with child and give birth to some monster with tail and horns—an imp or a mooncalf. But Hurmizah promised to protect her against shame. Taibele asked whether she need go to the ritual bath to cleanse herself after her impure days, but Hurmizah said that the laws concerning menstruation did not extend to those who consorted with the unclean host.

As THE saying goes, may God preserve us from all that we can get accustomed to. And so it was with Taibele. In the beginning she had feared that her nocturnal visitant might do her harm, give her boils or elflocks, make her bark like a dog or drink urine, and bring disgrace upon her. But Hurmizah did not whip her or pinch her or spit on her. On the contrary, he caressed her, whispered endearments, made puns and rhymes for her. Sometimes he pulled such pranks and babbled such devil's nonsense, that she was forced to laugh. He tugged at the lobe of her ear and gave her love-bites on the shoulder, and in the morning she found the marks of his teeth on her skin. He persuaded her to let her hair grow under her cap and he wove it into braids. He taught her charms and spells, told her about his night-brethren, the demons with whom he flew over ruins and fields of toadstools,

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over the salt marshes of Sodom, and the frozen wastes of the Sea of Ice. He did not deny that he had other wives, but they were all she-devils; Taibele was the only human wife he possessed. When Taibele asked him the names of his wives, he enumerated them: Namah, Machlath, Aff, Chuldah, Zluchah, Nafkah, and Cheimah. Seven altogether.

He told that Namah was black as pitch and full of rage. When she quarreled with him, she spat venom and blew fire and smoke through her nostrils.

Machlath had the face of a leech, and those whom she touched with her tongue were forever branded.

Aff loved to adorn herself with silver, emeralds, and diamonds. Her braids were of spun gold. On her ankles she wore bells and bracelets; when she danced, all the deserts rang out with their chiming.

Chuldah had the shape of a cat. She meowed instead of speaking. Her eyes were green as gooseberries. When she copulated, she always chewed bear's liver.

Zluchah was the enemy of brides. She robbed bridegrooms of potency. If a bride stepped outside alone at night during the Seven Nuptial Benedictions, Zluchah danced up to her and the bride lost the power of speech or was taken by a seizure.

Nafkah was lecherous, always betraying him with other demons. She retained his affections only by her vile and insolent talk, which delighted his heart.

Cheimah should have, according to her name, been as vicious as Namah should have been mild, but the reverse was true: Cheimah was a she-devil without gall. She was forever doing charitable deeds, kneading dough for housewives when they were ill, or bringing bread to the homes of the poor.

Thus Hurmizah described his wives, and told Taibele how he disported himself with them, playing tag over roofs and engaging in all sorts of pranks. Ordinarily, a woman is jealous when a man consorts with other women, but how can a human be jealous of a female devil? Quite the contrary. Hurmizah's tales amused Taibele, and she was always plying him with questions. Sometimes he revealed to her mysteries no mortal may know—about God, his angels and seraphs, his heavenly mansions, and the seven heavens. He also told her how sinners, male and female, were tortured in barrels of pitch and cauldrons of fiery coals, on beds studded with nails and in pits of snow, and how the Black Angels beat the bodies of the sinners with rods of fire.

The greatest punishment in hell was tickling, Hurmizah said. There was a certain imp in hell by the name of Lekish. When Lekish tickled an adulteress on her soles or under the arms, her tormented laughter echoed all the way to the island of Madagascar.

In this way, Hurmizah entertained Taibele all through the night, and soon it came about that she began to miss him when he was away. The summer nights seemed too short, for Hurmizah would leave soon after cockcrow. Even winter nights were not long enough. The truth was that she now loved Hurmizah, and though she knew a woman must not lust after a demon, she longed for him day and night.

II

ALTHOUGH Alchonon had been a widower for many years, matchmakers still tried to marry him off. The girls they proposed were from mean homes, widows and divorcees, for a teacher's helper was a poor provider, and Alchonon had besides the reputation of being a shiftless ne'er-do-well. Alchonon dismissed the offers on various pretexts: one woman was too ugly, the other had a foul tongue, the third was a slattern. The matchmakers wondered: how could a teacher's helper who earned nine *groschen* a week presume to be such a picker and chooser? And how long could a man live alone? But no one can be dragged by force to the wedding canopy.

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Alchonon knocked around town—long, lean, tattered, with a red disheveled beard, in a crumpled shirt, with his pointed Adam's apple jumping up and down. He waited for the wedding jester Reb Zekele to die, so that he could take over his job. But Reb Zekele was in no hurry to die; he still enlivened weddings with an inexhaustible flow of quips and rhymes, as in his younger days. Alchonon tried to set up on his own as a teacher for beginners, but no householder would entrust his child to him. Mornings and evenings, he took the boys to and from the *cheder*. During the day he sat in Reb Itchele the Teacher's courtyard, idly whittling wooden pointers, or cutting out paper decorations which were used only once a year, at Pentecost, or modeling figurines from clay. Not far from Taibele's store there was a well, and Alchonon came there many times a day, to draw a pail of water or to take a drink, spilling the water over his red beard. At these times, he would throw a quick glance at Taibele. Taibele pitied him: why was the man knocking about all by himself? And Alchonon would say to himself each time: "Woe, Taibele, if you knew the truth! . . ."

Alchonon lived in a garret, in the house of an old widow who was deaf and half-blind. The crone often chided him for not going to the synagogue to pray like other Jews. For as soon as Alchonon had taken the children home, he said a hasty evening prayer and went to bed. Sometimes the old woman thought she heard the teacher's helper get up in the middle of the night and go off somewhere. She asked him where he wandered at night, but Alchonon told her that she had been dreaming. The women who sat on benches in the evenings, knitting socks and gossiping, spread the rumor that after midnight Alchonon turned into a werewolf. Some women said that he was consorting with a succubus. Otherwise, why should a man remain so many years without a wife? The rich men would not trust their children to him any longer. He now escorted only the children of the poor, and seldom ate a spoonful of hot food, but had to content himself with dry crusts.

Alchonon became thinner and thinner, but his feet remained as nimble as ever. With his lanky legs, he seemed to stride down the street as though on stilts. He must have suffered constant thirst, for he was always coming down to the well. Sometimes he would merely help a dealer or peasant to water his horse. One day, when Taibele noticed from the distance how his caftan was torn and ragged, she called him into her shop. He threw her a frightened glance and turned white.

"I see your caftan is torn," said Taibele. "If you wish, I will advance you a few yards of cloth. You can pay it off later, a *grivnik* a week."

"No."

"Why not?" Taibele asked in astonishment. "I won't haul you before the Rabbi if you fall behind. You'll pay when you can."

"No."

And he quickly walked out of the store, fearing she might recognize his voice.

IN SUMMERTIME it was easy to visit Taibele in the middle of the night. Alchonon made his way through back lanes, clutching his caftan around his naked body. In winter, the dressing and undressing in Taibele's cold hallway became increasingly painful. But worst of all were the nights after a fresh snowfall. Alchonon was worried that Taibele or one of the neighbors might notice his tracks. He caught cold and began to cough. One night he got into Taibele's bed with his teeth chattering; he could not warm up for a long time. Afraid that she might discover his hoax, he invented explanations and excuses. But Taibele neither probed nor wished to probe too closely. She had long discovered that a devil had all the habits and frailties of a man. Hurmizah perspired, sneezed, hiccuped, yawned. Sometimes his breath smelled of onion, sometimes of garlic. His body felt like the

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body of her huband, bony and hairy, with an Adam's apple and a navel. At times, Hurmizah was in a jocular mood, at other times a sigh broke from him. His feet were not goose feet, but human, with nails and frost-blisters. Once Taibele asked him the meaning of these things, and Hurmizah explained:

"When one of us consorts with a human female, he assumes the shape of a man. Otherwise, she would die of fright."

Yes, Taibele got used to him and loved him. She was no longer terrified of him or his impish antics. His tales were inexhaustible, but Taibele often found contradictions in them. Like all liars, he had a short memory. He had told her at first that devils were immortal. But one night he asked:

"What will you do if I die?"

"But devils don't die!"

"They are taken to the lowest abyss. . . ."

That winter there was an epidemic in town. Foul winds came from the river, the woods, and the swamps. Not only children, but adults as well were brought down with the ague. It rained and it hailed. Floods broke the dam on the river. The storms blew off an arm of the windmill. On Wednesday night, when Hurmizah came into Taibele's bed, she noticed that his body was burning hot, but his feet were icy. He shivered and moaned. He tried to entertain her with talk of she-devils, of how they seduced young men, how they cavorted with other devils, splashed about in the ritual bath, tied elflocks in old men's beards, but he was weak and unable to possess her. She had never seen him in such a wretched state. Her heart misgave her. She asked:

"Shall I get you some raspberries with milk?"

Hurmizah replied: "Such remedies are not for our kind."

"What do you do when you get sick?"

"We itch and we scratch. . . ."

He spoke little after that. When he kissed Taibele, his breath was sour. He always remained with her until cockcrow, but this time he left early. Taibele lay silent, listening to his movements in the hallway. He had sworn to her that he flew out of the window even when it was closed and sealed, but she heard the door creak. Taibele knew that it was sinful to pray for devils, that one must curse them and blot them from memory; yet she prayed to God for Hurmizah.

She cried out in anguish: "There are so many devils, let there be one more. . . ."

On the following Sabbath Taibele waited in vain for Hurmizah until dawn; he never came. She called him inwardly and muttered the spells he had taught her, but the hallway was silent. Taibele lay benumbed. Hurmizah had once boasted that he had danced for Tubal-cain and Enoch, that he had sat on the roof of Noah's Ark, licked the salt from the nose of Lot's wife, and plucked Ahasuerus by the beard. He had prophesied that she would be reincarnated after a hundred years as a princess, and that he, Hurmizah, would capture her, with the help of his slaves Chittim and Tachtim, and carry her off to the palace of Bashemath, the wife of Esau. But now he was probably lying somewhere ill, a helpless demon, a lonely orphan—without father or mother, without a faithful wife to care for him. Taibele recalled how his breath came rasping like a saw when he had been with her last; when he blew his nose, there was a whistling in his ear. From Sunday to Wednesday Taibele went about as one in a dream. On Wednesday she could hardly wait until the clock struck midnight, but the night went, and Hurmizah did not appear. Taibele turned her face to the wall.

The day began, dark as evening. Fine snow dust was falling from the murky sky. The smoke could not rise from the chimneys; it spread over the roofs like ragged sheets. The rooks cawed harshly. Dogs barked. After the miserable night, Taibele had no strength to go to her store. Nevertheless, she dressed and went outside. She

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saw four pallbearers carrying a stretcher. From under the snow-swept coverlet protruded the blue feet of a corpse. Only the sexton followed the dead man. Taibele asked who it was, and the sexton answered:

"Alchonon, the teacher's helper."

A strange idea came to Taibele—to escort Alchonon, the feckless man who had lived alone and died alone, on his last journey. Who would come to the store today? And what did she care for business? Taibele had lost everything. At least, she would be doing a good deed. She followed the dead on the long road to the cemetery. There she waited while the gravedigger swept away the snow and dug a grave in the frozen earth. They wrapped Alchonon the teacher's helper in a prayer shawl and a cowl, placed shards on his eyes, and stuck between his fingers a myrtle twig that he would use to dig his way to the Holy Land when the Messiah came. Then the grave was closed and the gravedigger recited the Kaddish. A cry broke from Taibele. This Alchonon had lived a lonely life, just as she did. Like her, he left no heir. Yes, Alchonon the teacher's helper had danced his last dance. From Hurmizah's tales, Taibele knew that the deceased did not go straight to heaven. Every sin creates a devil, and these devils are a man's children after his death. They come to demand their share. They call the dead man Father and roll him through forest and wilderness until the measure of his punishment is filled and he is ready for purification in hell. . . .

From then on Taibele remained alone, doubly deserted—by an ascetic and by a devil. She aged quickly. Nothing was left to her of the past except a secret that could never be told and would be believed by no one. There are secrets that the heart cannot reveal to the lips. They are carried to the grave. The willows murmur of them, the rooks caw about them, the gravestones converse about them silently, in the language of stone. The dead will awaken one day, but their secrets will abide with the Almighty and His Judgment until the end of all generations.

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JOHN MANDER

LITTLE ENGLAND

LONDON

A GENERATION AGO, not even the most rabid of Briton-baiters would have called the British an introspective people. Egotistical we were, no doubt, but in the smug, comfortable way of folk who have money in the bank and an unshaken confidence in the police. John Bull had become somewhat less expansive, and he was already a little jealous of his rich American cousins. Nevertheless he was still pretty certain that Pax Britannica represented an unmitigated blessing to the world. At home, there were rumors of class war, but the failure of the General Strike in 1926 and Stanley Baldwin's work of reconciliation had taken social revolution off the agenda before the "revolutionary" 30's began. And those writers of the 30's—Auden, Spender, Orwell, Kingsley Martin, Harold Laski, John Strachey—made astonishingly little impact on English society at the time. It is safe to say that the average Englishman knew very little of the doings of the Left Book Club, and cared less. As long as Germany and Russia were weak, and America isolationist, Britain could lord it over India, the Middle East, and half of Africa, without fear of contradiction. And the basis of her power was still what it had been in the 18th century: Britannia ruled the waves.

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The Cuban crisis has brought one thing home to the British very forcibly: Britannia rules the waves no more. To the outside observer, of course, this has been clear for some time—since, say, the Battle of Midway in 1942. That was the moment when America assumed the mantle of those world-wide maritime responsibilities which all too plainly were beyond Britain's strength. What is really surprising—and highly significant—is that the British should have taken so long to recognize that the basis of their power had disappeared. The suddenness of the disappearance goes some way toward explaining British slowness: only three years divided their apparently unchallenged supremacy of 1939 from the Singapore disaster of 1942. But national power is one thing and national psychology another. The British did not realize in 1942 and, in an important sense, do not fully realize now, that a collapse of national power has taken place comparable to the collapse of Hapsburg power during the First World War.

The loss of power suffered by the nations of Europe as a result of World War II has been roughly equal to Britain's, but the Continent's reactions to that loss have been different. European national psychology has on the whole accepted the new facts of power, and this acceptance has led to a recognition of the need for unity which has been expressed in the creation of such institutions as the European Parliament at Strasbourg, the Coal and Steel Community at Luxemburg, the ill-starred

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European Defense Community project of 1954, and—most successful of all—the Common Market. It is because Britain for so long resisted the new facts of power, and was therefore out of step with these aspirations toward unity, that her entry into Europe has now become so laborious and painful.

BEFORE GOING further into this theme, let us look briefly at the relation of Britain to America. At the risk of oversimplification, it can be said that since the 1930's Britain and the U.S. have adopted one another's abandoned political-psychological postures. The isolationism that determined American policy between the wars must now seem a gross failure of political imagination and responsibility. World War I had given ample evidence that the Western democracies were not able to stand alone against a hostile (reactionary or revolutionary) land power in Europe. America, then, is almost as much to blame for Munich as Britain and France; for her sloughing off of the responsibilities assumed in 1917 contributed to the demoralization of the Western democracies. Pearl Harbor, as we know, compelled a radically different posture. But one cannot help thinking that America's postwar impatience with neutralism springs partly from an uneasy conscience about her own pre-war isolationism.

But the seven devils of isolationism, which Pearl Harbor expelled from the American body politic, would appear to have entered into that of her transatlantic ally. Officially, Britain has been since 1941, and is today, America's close and devoted friend. The reality, however, is somewhat different. Resentment against U.S. "usurpation" of British power goes very deep. It lies behind the attitudes of both extreme Left and extreme Right, and in moments of crisis (as recently over Cuba) seems to spread centripetally through the main stream of public opinion. In this sense the nuclear disarmers and the Beaverbrook press—both of which it is fashionable to dismiss as lacking real political influence—are merely two caps of the same iceberg. Moreover, a cross-connection between the two groups exists: many of the left-wing *Tribune*'s best-known writers have over the years come to be associated with the *Express* newspapers. I am not sure what impression the American public has been given of British reaction to the Cuba crisis, but the greater part of British opinion—and certainly its most articulate and liberal section—was not behind the President's action. The nuclear disarmers demonstrated vigorously—outside the U.S., not the Soviet, Embassy. Again, the young left-wingers who have been shouting "Hands Off Cuba" this past fall were not to be found shouting "Hands Off Berlin" during a similar period of crisis a year earlier. One could multiply examples. But sentiments to the effect that "Britain ought to play a mediating role in the cold war" are probably shared by a majority of the British people: Mr. Macmillan's rather humiliating 1959 trip to Moscow was an election-winner. Now there obviously *are* occasions when Britain might successfully mediate between America and Russia and serve the cause of peace. But only a hair's breadth divides the will to mediate from a position of ideological neutrality between the two blocs.

There is, of course, one fundamental difference between America's former complacency and that of present-day Britain. America in her isolationist period was a young, self-confident, and expanding power, not yet acquainted with the facts of life; Britain today is a country well past the peak of its national power. The new complacency is correspondingly recessive, defensive, inward-looking; it puts on a good show, but is not really confident. The British have become—at first shamefacedly, but now with disconcerting relish—an introspective people.

To illustrate the point, one might refer to such phenomena as John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger;* Kingsley Amis's novel *I Like It Here;* the "New Left" lit-

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erary sociology of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams; the highly inbred social novels of Angus Wilson, Anthony Powell, or C. P. Snow. Leaving the question of merit to one side, these works have in common an obsession with the trappings of English society—class distinctions, accents, party manners, private jokes—that will soon make British writing suitable only for home consumption. It is true that some of the names I have listed are known as rebels against the "Establishment," but they are not the less involved in the Establishment for that. And perhaps the most striking thing about this new literature is that criticisms of Britain are never made with reference to conditions obtaining elsewhere in the world. "I like it here" has taken the place of "They order this matter better in France." Our rebels, in short, are caught up in the same insularity for which they criticize our Establishment.

A good example, taken more or less at random, can be found in one of last fall's best-sellers—a book by Mr. Anthony Sampson entitled *An Anatomy of Britain.** Ostensibly it presented itself—like many similar books over the past four or five years—as an assault on Britain's Establishment and her antiquated class structure. But the book is in fact an analysis, undertaken with loving care, of the curious workings of the Civil Service, of the City, of the Peerage, of that mystifying hierarchy of privilege represented by Eton and Winchester, Oxford and Cambridge, the Guards, the Treasury, the Athenaeum. Nor does Mr. Sampson seek to rationalize these mysteries—which would necessarily imply some criticism of the assumptions on which they rest; he compounds them by accepting the assumptions without question. And it is this combination of self-critical purpose and complacent acceptance that seems to me to make *An Anatomy of Britain* typical.

An uneasiness about Britain's position in the world and an awareness that Britain, once the pacemaker of the first industrial revolution, now lags behind in her social development, run through most of the "protest" literature from Right and Left that has appeared since (to take an arbitrary date) the runaway success of *Look Back in Anger* on the West End stage in 1956. That it is an almost neurotic unease, not genuine rebellion, we have to deal with here is plain from the euphoric self-congratulation into which many of the protesters relapse. Take Mr. John Osborne, for instance. A year ago, at the height of the Berlin crisis, he wrote a somewhat hysterical open letter to the weekly *Tribune,* in which he declared his "hatred" of England, the English, and their demented rulers. (As the press unkindly pointed out, the letter had been penned and posted on a Riviera holiday.) This year the performance was repeated with a further Osborne letter to the *Tribune,* in which Adenauer and de Gaulle were presented as no different from the European dictators of twenty years ago—the implication being this time that only Britain could stand as a bulwark against them.

WHATEVER else they may signify, such sudden switches from self-contempt to chauvinistic exaltation are not gestures of self-confidence. They are oddly reminiscent of the neurotic self-questioning common in Europe shortly after the war: those convolutions of German intellectuals on the subject of war guilt; that almost sado-masochistic relation to America (and to Germany) evident in the attitudes of Sartre and his circle. And a similar latent hysteria can be traced in a good many British political attitudes since the middle 50's.

Perhaps the most striking is the attitude toward the nuclear deterrent. It was the Labor government of 1945–51 that first committed Britain to building a nuclear arsenal independent of the United States. The basic motive was simple: sovereignty, in the nuclear age, was thought to depend

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on the possession of nuclear capability. The government evidently felt that there were circumstances in which the interests of the United States and Britain might not coincide; a separate deterrent would then guarantee an independent foreign policy. The decision to build a nuclear force logically contained an anti-American component, for if America could be wholly trusted, a separate deterrent would be unnecessary. This argument, after Cuba and Nassau, has by no means lost its relevance: it underlies General de Gaulle's plans for the Europe of the future. It would be a mistake to impute this position to de Gaulle alone: a great many other people in Europe are also convinced that Europe, with an economic potential as great as America's, must eventually rely on herself for her own defense. But what concerns us here is not so much the merit of these aspirations (though I should add parenthetically that given the growing confidence of the nations of continental Europe the aspirations seem to me both inevitable and justified) as the contrast between the current French, or European, posture and that seemingly dominant in Britain.

Britain is to have Polaris. But can a deterrent be both "fully independent" and simultaneously "fully integrated" with U.S. or NATO forces? How the government will sort this out is still quite uncertain—perhaps a horse-trade with the French, exchanging Britain's nuclear know-how for better terms of entry into the Common Market, is still in the cards. But the ambiguity of its stand fairly reflects public confusion on the issue. If the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has lost a good deal of ground recently (having failed to capture the Labor party in the years 1958–1961, it is now without much direct political influence), that is partly because its arguments have come to be generally accepted. Most informed liberal opinion seems now to be against Britain's having a nuclear striking force. The issue no longer seems to turn on whether, but on how and when, to let the deterrent lapse. To do so, of course, would be to put Britain entirely under American nuclear protection. There may be good reasons for doing this. But the presupposition would appear to be that Britain's trust in America's intentions has grown so greatly since the 1940's that the Attlee government's suspicions have now become groundless. Yet, as we have seen, the British public's reaction to the Cuban crisis does not at all suggest implicit faith in U.S. intentions. The gap between the British public's feelings about the cold war and the American public's has steadily grown since the years of the Berlin airlift and the Korean War. Government pronouncements notwithstanding, it is now a very wide gap indeed. Thus we have the spectacle of a virulently anti-American Left putting forward a policy which paradoxically would seem to involve complete submission to American interests.

YET WHAT is really implied in all this —though seldom openly declared, even on the extreme Left—is something rather different: a deep longing for neutrality. But there is, after all, a neutralism *à la* de Gaulle, which implies a strong, self-reliant Third Force, and a neutralism *à la* Nkrumah, which assumes an equal balance of power in the world, and hopes to profit from the conflict between the great powers. In the 1940's Britain may be said to have had the former in mind—and could perhaps have lent Europe some of her self-confidence. Now, and not by any means only on the extreme Left, it is rather the second possibility that many people seem to have in mind.

The extent to which this incipient neutralism has permeated popular thinking, and generated political inertia of its own, is not easy to judge. The most concrete evidence of its political strength was the public reaction to the British government's initiatives after the Berlin crisis of November 1958. There can be no doubt that this policy of "mediation" (as its friends call it) or of "appeasement" (as its

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critics insist) was almost universally popular in Britain—and correspondingly unpopular in France and Germany. The British had come a long way in the cold war from where they had been ten years earlier. At the time of the airlift, public opinion was almost unanimously behind a policy of firmness in Berlin. In the Korean crisis too, British opinion was solidly behind American policy. By 1958, however, the British government seemed to be moving toward a half-way acceptance of Soviet proposals on Berlin (de facto recognition of East Germany, "disengagement" in Central Europe, etc.). And public opinion was now acting as a spur to every further concession and conciliation. Of the determination to defend Berlin's freedom shown by British opinion in 1948, little remained to face the Berlin wall. Anti-German and anti-American feeling had enormously increased; anger at Russia's resumption of nuclear testing was as nothing compared to the indignation at America's decision to follow suit. The wheel appeared to have come full circle. The follies of appeasement in the 30's were to be recapitulated in the 60's. Ominously, it was now not only the ex-Bevanite and fellow-traveling Left, and the isolationist Beaverbrook Right, who clamored for an accommodation with Russia at the expense of the hated Germans: the liberal *Guardian* and *Observer,* even the moderate conservative *Sunday Times,* were moving in that direction too.

A straw showed the way the wind was blowing: that summer, within weeks of Khrushchev's Vienna ultimatum and after he had taken a British ambassador aside at the Bolshoi Theatre and assured him that five bombs would be sufficient to wipe his country from the map, Yuri Gagarin arrived in London and was given—to the initial embarrassment of the government, let it be said—a reception so hysterical as to reawaken echoes of those luncheons Lady Astor gave Herr von Ribbentrop a generation before. Then as now it was public opinion—not Vansittart's or Home's Foreign Office—that was the pacemaker of appeasement.

Nevertheless, to future historians it may appear that the year 1961 marked the turning of this tide of neutralism and isolationism. For in July of that year the British government announced its willingness to join the Common Market. This decision had slowly matured during the respite between the collapse of the 1960 Paris Summit (and therein of Macmillan's policy of mediation) and President Kennedy's Vienna meeting with Khrushchev. In the course of that year, two facts had emerged with alarming clarity: first, the success of the Common Market was no longer in doubt; secondly, President Kennedy was seeking no further service from Mr. Macmillan as a mediator in the cold war. The consequences of British indifference to Europe were now coming home to roost. Equally, the logic of "mediation" was now seen for what it was: a contradictory attempt to be detached and committed at one and the same time. What internal debates preceded this momentous decision to join Europe we do not yet know. Pressure from industry was certainly important—though the government's initial emphasis on the economic aspects was rather a tactical device to distract public attention from the profound political implications. The Kennedy administration's obvious wish to see Britain in Europe also played its part, but the decision, as is now increasingly clear, was one freely taken, after elaborate preparation and consultation; and it was always at bottom dictated by political and not economic considerations. Though I am a supporter of the Labor party, this decision seems to me the most important and courageous one that a British government has made since Dunkirk.

IF THIS picture of events is correct—and it would be disputed in Britain by many on both the Right and the Left—it should follow that entry into the Common Market will put an end to the state of affairs I

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have described. Naturally there is no guarantee that it will. It is equally possible that the unreadiness of public opinion (despite the not unfavorable opinion polls), combined with the effects of sharp continental competition, may give rise to new outbursts of anti-German and anti-American feeling, and encourage a further retreat into isolationist complacency. National psychology is a delicate and unpredictable thing. What will have to happen, taking the optimistic view, is something of this sort: Britain will have to recapitulate, in a comparatively short space of time, the postwar experiences of her continental neighbors. Unless she does so, unless she comes to see her postwar history in roughly the same perspective as the European Six see theirs, she is likely to remain out of phase with the experiences that have made the European revival possible.

What are these experiences? The three most important were wartime occupation, loss of imperial positions, and direct confrontation with Soviet power. The significance of the first is often overlooked. It is assumed that the natural bond is between the victors in war, but such an assumption overlooks the fact that each European country was, during the course of the war, both vanquished and victor. France helped to defeat Germany, but only after Germany had defeated France. Italy shared Germany's early victories, yet was conclusively beaten before the end. The Benelux countries shared the Allies' final triumph, but had already learned the full bitterness of foreign conquest and occupation. Indeed, of the belligerents in the Second World War, only the British and Americans did not to some extent undergo this experience. In this they were fortunate. But for Britain at least, the long-term consequences have been less happy. For it was largely Britain's contempt for the "weakness" of her European neighbors, and an unrealistic estimate of her own strength, that led her to cold-shoulder European aspirations toward unity. Seldom has a nation fallen victim to its own capacity for myth-making so disastrously as Britain in her exaltation of the "Dunkirk spirit" and her Churchillian "finest hour." It was a clear understanding of their new weakness, on the other hand, that convinced the Europeans of the need to unite.

This new European awareness had a further aspect. The war was hardly over when the European countries faced a new test of power in their colonial empires. The story does not need to be told in detail; it is enough to point out that in the years between 1942 and 1962 every country of Common Market Europe was compelled to abandon its claim to empire. These countries discovered, some earlier than others, that there was no alternative to the appeasement of Asian and African nationalism but increasing, and apparently endless, violence. But they also discovered —and this eased the transition—that the economic arguments for empire had disappeared. How, then, did this experience differ from Britain's? The answer is paradoxical. Britain, the man in the street will tell you, managed the transition more skillfully and humanely than her continental neighbors. That is perfectly true. The British record—even allowing for Kenya, Cyprus, and the Rhodesias—is quite certainly better than continental Europe's. But the effect on Britain herself has been very different and, as with our war-time experience, ultimately damaging. For the emotional pro-Commonwealth outbursts of the past few months are all too clearly the result of a failure to see that Britain has lost imperial authority as finally as have France, Holland, or Italy. It seems that the very non-violence of the transition has persuaded the British people that they can have their imperial cake and eat it too.

THE THIRD postwar experience which the continental European countries shared, but Britain had no part in, was the confrontation with militant Communism. Again, this has taken different forms in different countries. The Germans have ex-

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perienced Communism, first as a conquering army, then as a hostile, separatist state within their own frontiers. Not surprisingly, they are now the most violently anti-Communist people in Europe. Likewise, the pattern of French and Italian postwar politics makes sense only when the existence of a large, intransigently hostile minority group is taken into account. The Italian *Democrazia Christiana* is to be understood as a response to this internal threat; and Gaullism began its postwar life as a rally against what de Gaulle called *"les separatistes."* But, despite the hard, and ultimately successful war she fought in Malaya, Britain has not experienced Communist power as a direct military or political threat to herself since the Korean War, which, moreover, had far less impact here than in America.

It is clear that the postwar evolution of Britain and Europe is rich in irony. Under one aspect, it is a tale of national hubris and humiliation; pride has ridden for a fall, the meek have inherited the earth. Yet this is not wholly fair. For even Britain's virtues—her moderation, her fair-mindedness, her instinct for continuity—have contributed to her plight. Fair-mindedness has prevented her people from seeing the beam in the Russian eye; moderation has shielded them from the truth about their lost imperial position; instinct for continuity has encouraged the illusion that nothing important has really changed. No man in his senses would argue that violent change is desirable for its own sake. Yet the greater suffering of the European peoples has not gone unrewarded—even in material terms. If their class structures have largely broken down, their social mobility and efficiency increased, that is due to the violence of the upheavals of 1944–45. These things have been going on in Britain too, but the new energies set free by the "social revolution" of the postwar Labor government are as nothing compared with the energies set free in Europe by the war and its aftermath. The fact is, nevertheless, that Britain has shared rather more of the general experience of Europe since 1945 than her people imagine. It is only the interpretation that has differed. If the shock of the Common Market causes the British to reinterpret their postwar experience in "European" terms, the British malaise of the late 50's and early 60's may come to seem no more than a temporary and localized infection.

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NORMAN MAILER

Responses & Reactions II

This is the second in a bi-monthly series of personal commentaries by NORMAN MAILER *on selections from Martin Buber's two-volume collection,* Tales of the Hasidim. *Among Mr. Mailer's works are* The Naked and the Dead, Barbary Shore, *and* The Deer Park.

ON P. 293 OF *The Early Masters* is a short story.

The Test

It is told:

When Prince Adam Czartoryski, the friend and counsellor of Czar Alexander, had been married for many years and still had no children, he went to the maggid of Koznitz and asked him to pray for him and because of his prayer the princess bore a son. At the baptism, the father told of the maggid's intercession with God. His brother who, with his young son, was among the guests, made fun of what he called the prince's superstition. "Let us go to your wonder-worker together," he said, "and I shall show you that he can't tell the difference between left and right."

Together they journeyed to Koznitz, which was close to where they lived. "I beg of you," Adam's brother said to the maggid, "to pray for my sick son."

The maggid bowed his head in silence. "Will you do this for me?" the other urged.

The maggid raised his head. "Go," he said, and Adam saw that he only managed to speak with a great effort. "Go quickly, and perhaps you will still see him alive."

"Well, what did I tell you?" Adam's brother said laughingly as they got into their carriage. Adam was silent during the ride. When they drove into the court of his house, they found the boy dead.

What is suggested by the story is an underworld of real events whose connection is never absurd. Consider, in parallel, this Haiku:*

So soon to die
and no sign of it is showing—
locust cry.

The sense of stillness and approaching death is occupied by the cry of the locust. Its metallic note becomes the exact equal of an oncoming death. Much of Haiku can best be understood as a set of equations in mood. Man inserting himself into a mood extracts an answer from nature which is not only the reaction of the man upon the mood, but is a supernatural equivalent to the quality of the experience, almost as if a key is given up from the underworld to unlock the surface of reality.

Here for example is an intimation of the architecture concealed beneath:

Upsetting the Bowl†

It is told:

Once Rabbi Elimelekh was eating the Sabbath meal with his disciples. The servant set the soup bowl down before him. Rabbi Elimelekh raised it and upset it, so that the soup poured over the table. All at once young Mendel, later the rabbi of Rymanov, cried out: "Rabbi what are you doing? They will put us all in jail!" The other disciples smiled at these foolish words. They would have laughed out loud,

* *An Introduction to Haiku* by Harold G. Henderson, p. 43. The poem is by Matsuo Basho, translated by Henderson.

Yagate shinu
keshiki wa mei-zo
semi-no koe

† *The Early Masters,* Schocken Books, p. 259.

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had not the presence of their teacher restrained them. He, however, did not smile. He nodded to young Mendel and said: "Do not be afraid, my son!"

Some time after this, it became known that on that day an edict directed against the Jews of the whole country had been presented to the emperor for his signature. Time after time he took up his pen, but something always happened to interrupt him. Finally he signed the paper. Then he reached for the sand-container but took the inkwell instead and upset it on the document. Hereupon he tore it up and forbade them to put the edict before him again.

A magical action in one part of the world creates its historical action in another—we are dealing with no less than totem and taboo. Psychoanalysis intrudes itself. One of the last, may it be one of the best approaches to modern neurosis is by way of the phenomenological apparatus of anxiety. As we sink into the apathetic bog of our possible extinction, so a breath of the Satanic seems to rise from the swamp. The magic of materials lifts into consciousness, proceeds to dominate us, is even enthroned into a usurpation of consciousness. The protagonists of *Last Year at Marienbad* are not so much people as halls and chandeliers, gaming tables, cigarettes in their pyramid of 1, 3, 5, and 7. The human characters are ghosts, disembodied servants, attendants who cast their shadows on the material. It is no longer significant that a man carries a silver cigarette case; rather it is the cigarette case which is significant. The man becomes an instrument to transport the case from the breast pocket of a suit into the air; like a building crane, a hand conducts the cigarette case to an angle with the light, fingers open the catch and thus elicit a muted sound of boredom, a silver groan from the throat of the case, which now offers up a cigarette, snaps its satisfaction at being shut, and seems to guide the hand back to the breast pocket. The man, on leave until he is called again, goes through a pantomime of small empty activities—without the illumination of his case he is like all dull servants who cannot use their liberty.

That, one may suppose, is a proper portrait of Hell. It is certainly the air of the phenomenological novel. It is as well the neurotic in slavery to the material objects which make up the locks and keys of his compulsion.

But allow me a quick portrait of a neurotic. He is a sociologist, let us say, working for a progressive foundation, a disenchanted atheist ("Who knows—God may exist as some kind of thwarted benevolence"), a liberal, a social planner, a member of SANE, a logical positivist, a collector of jokes about fags and beatniks, a lover of that large suburban land between art and the documentary. He smokes two packs of cigarettes a day: he drinks—*when* he drinks—eight or ten tots of blended whiskey in a night. He does not get drunk, merely cerebral, amusing, and happy. Once when he came home thus drunk, he bowed to his door and then touched his doorknob three times. After this, he went to bed and slept like a thief.

Two years later he is in slavery to the doorknob. He must wipe it with his fingertips three times each morning before he goes out. If he forgets to do this and only remembers later at work, his day is shattered. Anxiety bursts his concentration. His psyche has the air of a bombed city. In an extreme case, he may even have to return to his home. His first question to himself is whether someone has touched the knob since he left. He makes inquiries. To his horror he discovers the servant has gone out shopping already. She has therefore touched the knob and it has lost its magical property. Stratagems are now necessary. He must devote the rest of the day to encouraging the servant to go out in such a manner that he can open the door for her, and thus remove the prior touch of her hand.

Is he mad? the man asks himself. Later he will ask his analyst the same question. But he is too aware of the absurdity of his activities. He suffers at the thought of the work he is not accomplishing, he hates himself for being attached to the doorknob, he tries to extirpate its dominance. One morning he makes an effort to move out briskly. He does not touch the brass a second and third time. But his feet come to a halt, his body turns around as if a gyroscope were revolving him, his arm turns to the knob and pats it twice. He no longer feels his psyche is to be torn in two. Consummate relief.

Of course his analysis discloses wonders. He has been an only son. His mother, his father, and himself make three. He and his

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wife (a naturally not very happy marriage) have one child. The value of the trinities is considered dubious by the analyst but is insisted upon by the patient. He has found that he need touch the doorknob only once if he repeats to himself, "I was born, I live, and I die." After a time he finds that he does not have to touch the knob at all, or upon occasion, can use his left hand for the purpose. There is a penalty, however. He is obliged to be concerned with the number nine for the rest of the day. Nine sips of water from a glass. A porterhouse steak consumed in nine bites. His wife to be kissed nine times between supper and bed. "I've kicked over an ant hill," he confesses to his analyst. "I'm going bugs."

They work in his cause. Two testes and one penis makes three. Two eyes and one nose; two nostrils and one mouth; the throat, the tongue, and the teeth. His job, his family, and himself. The door, the doorknob, and the act of opening it.

Then he has a revelation. He wakes up one morning and does not reach for a cigarette. There is a tension in him to wait. He suffers agonies—the brightest and most impatient of his cells seem to be expiring without nicotine—still he has intimations of later morning bliss, he hangs on. Like an infantryman coming up alive from a forty-eight hour shelling, he gets to his hat, his attaché case, and the doorknob. As he touches it, a current flows into his hand. "Stick with me, pal," says the message, "One and two keep you from three."

Traveling to the office in the last half hour of the subway rush, he is happy for the first time in years. As he holds to the baked enamel loop of the subway strap, his fingers curl up a little higher and touch the green painted metal above the loop. A current returns to him again. Through his fingertips he feels a psychic topography which has dimensions, avenues, signals, buildings. From the metal of the subway strap through the metal of the subway car, down along the rails, into the tunnels of the city, back to the sewer pipes and electric cables which surround the subway station from which he left, back to his house, and up the plumbing, up the steam pipe, up the hall, a leap through the air, and he has come back to the door knob again. He pats the subway strap three times. The ship of his body will sink no further. "Today," thinks the sociologist, "I signed my armistice. The flag of Faust has been planted here."

But in his office he has palpitations. He believes he will have a heart attack. He needs air. He opens the window, leans out from the waist. By God, he almost jumped!

The force which drew him to touch the knob now seems to want to pull his chest through the window. Or is it a force opposed to the force which made him touch the door knob? He does not know. He thinks God may be telling him to jump. That thwarted benevolent God. "You are swearing allegiance to materials," says a voice. "Come back, son. It is better to be dead."

Poor man. He is not bold enough to be Faust. He calls his analyst.

"Now, for God's sake, don't do anything," says the analyst. "This is not uncommon. Blocked material is rising to the surface. It's premature, but since we've gotten into it, repetition compulsions have to do with omnipotence fantasies which of course always involve Almighty figures and totemic Satanistic contracts. The urge to suicide is not bona fide in your case—it's merely a symbolic contraction of the anxiety."

"But I tell you I almost went through the window. I felt my feet start to leave the floor."

"Well, come by my office then. I can't see you right now—trust me on this—I've got a girl who will feel I've denied her her real chance to bear children if I cut into her hour, she's had too many abortions. You know, she's touchy"—rare is the analyst who won't gossip a *little* about his patients, it seems to calm the other patients—"but I'll leave an envelope of tranquilizers for you on the desk. They're a new formula. They're good. Take two right away. Then two more this afternon. Forget the nausea if it comes. Just side-effect. We'll get together this evening."

"Mind if I touch your door knob three times?"

"Great. You've got your sense of humor back. Yes, by all means, touch it."

So soon to die
and no sign of it is showing—
locust cry.

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THE IDEALISM OF MILOVAN DJILAS

Bogdan Raditsa

IN THE PERIOD shortly before the outbreak of World War II, the Communist underground in Yugoslavia was shaken by a fierce literary and intellectual conflict. At the time, the leader of literary Marxism in Yugoslavia was Miroslav Krleza—the Croatian novelist, poet, and critic. Along with such Serbian writers as Milan Bogdanovic and Marko Ristic, Krleza had been editing several magazines which, when they were not being suppressed by the censors, had begun to develop the position that literature must become independent of party dogma, specifically of the prevailing Stalinist doctrine of "socialist realism." Though Krleza had been one of the leading figures in Yugoslav Marxism during the past two decades, he was now violently attacked for this heresy and was soon excommunicated by the underground party's Central Committee. The leaders of the attack against him were two untalented writers, Radovan Zogovic and Jovan Popovic, and an intransigent Stalinist intellectual by the name of Milovan Djilas. In the course of the polemics that raged back and forth, Krleza published a pamphlet titled "Anti-barbarus," which characterized this "troika," and particularly Djilas, as fanatical barbarians, who sought to destroy the growth of culture and to keep the country submerged in primitive backwardness and illiteracy.

When I saw Krleza in Zagreb in 1945, he was waiting to discover what his fate would be in the new age of Yugoslav Communism. Tito and Djilas were then visiting in Zagreb but refused to meet with Krleza, much less reinstate him; knowing Djilas, Krleza expected the worst. When this veteran Marxist was eventually accepted again by the party, it was through the personal influence of Tito; and so far as I know Krleza and his old enemy Djilas have never been reconciled. Today, Krleza is the leading writer and academician of the Communist establishment, while Djilas is in jail for embracing the cause of free speech—a cause which until 1953 he had single-mindedly fought against and despised.

In order to understand the career which has led this tormented and searching man from a fanatical Stalinism to an outspoken anti-Stalinism (during the period of the Moscow-Belgrade rupture) and finally into a complete repudiation of Titoist Communism (of which he was probably the chief architect) and a conversion to the ideals of Western democracy, it is necessary to cut through some of the vague heroic aura that currently surrounds his figure in the West and to see him, early and late, as the product of a particular web of personal and cultural circumstances.

TO BEGIN WITH, there is Djilas's Montenegrin background. A mountainous and primitive region, Montenegro has had a long history of clans and tribes who exterminated each other mercilessly in the name of some principle of justice, the Partisan War during and after the Nazi occupation being only one of the bloodier chapters in the region's annals of violent civil strife. Much of the character of this patriarchal society, with its almost Spartan asceticism and rigidity, was formed by indigenous religious influences. In the Montenegrin mountains, as in those of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Christianity was not controlled by the Byzantine Church—as it was in the regions to the southeast—nor by the Roman Catholic Church—as it was in the regions to the northwest. From the early 10th to the 15th centuries, this area was the stronghold of the Bogomil Manichean heresy which developed an inflexible hostility to the religious and cultural influences of both East and West. Balkan Bogomilism, whose followers called themselves the true *Krstjani,* not only refused to be drawn into the orbits of Byzantium or Rome

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but also preserved a fierce religious anarchism that saw in all visible things, including organized churches and formalized services, the work of the devil, and only in the invisible world the presence of God. The typical Bogomil was as grimly severe with himself as he was pessimistic about the world, from which his only escape was through an unyielding attachment to a completely abstract God.

One of the most impressive and influential figures of Montenegrin culture was the 19th-century poet Petar Petrovic-Njegos. Though a Greek Orthodox bishop, Njegos was in spirit a Bogomil. He left behind in his poetry a powerful critique of the split between Western rationalism and Eastern mysticism and richly adumbrated the Bogomil view that the "world is a component of evil discordance" and "human life . . . a terrifying nightmare." Among the most faithful readers of this Montenegrin seer was Milovan Djilas, who has spent some of his recent years in prison writing a long and penetrating study of Njegos.

THE MAJOR purpose of Njegos's life lay in combating the spread of Islam which the Turks had brought with them into the South Balkans. During the fanatical crusade he carried on against the Islamic influence, Njegos demanded the death of all Montenegrins who had forsaken Christianity, and ruled that anyone who did not seek vengeance upon the apostates was not a true Christian. Njegos's merciless demand for religious purity had in it much of the old Bogomil xenophobia as well as a strong tincture of 19th-century Slavophilism. He was no less hostile to the impact of Western positivism upon the South Slavs than he was to the spread of Eastern mysticism, and believed that the cynical imperialism of the Western powers toward the Balkans was as menacing as the ruthless despotism of the Ottoman Empire. If Njegos continued to affirm that the world was beset by unbridgeable contradictions which man was too weak and God too remote to resolve, he was also attracted to the idea that what possibility there existed of salvation could come only from "holy Russia"—the great mother of the Slavs.

However grim this vision of life and however dubious its faith in Russia's destiny, the writings of Njegos had a powerful effect upon the young nationalists and Marxists who were to spring up in the Balkans. The ancient fervors and mirages of an indigenous militant orthodoxy were rooted in their souls as intimately as they had been in the souls of the Old Believers and of the Bogomil or Bosnian *Krstjani*. The idealism of the generation of intellectuals that preceded Djilas's was nationalistic, and they took as their mission in life the destruction of the declining Ottoman Empire in the south and of the Austro-Hungarian in the north. Inspired by 19th-century revolutionary and nihilistic literature, the Gacinovics and Princips were also animated by a Dostoevskian vision of a Slavic messianism that would regenerate the West once its decadent regimes had been demolished. The principal figure of this generation was Gavrilo Princip, who literally fired the shot that began World War I. Survivors of his generation such as Ivo Andric, the Nobel Prize winner, and Vaso Gubrilovic, a leading Yugoslav scholar, still believe that Princip's action was not only understandable but legitimate.

Essentially anarchistic and mystical, this intelligentsia was unprepared to organize a new social and political order that would satisfy the masses. With the creation of Yugoslavia after the First World War, the militants who had fought the Balkan Wars and the world war to liberate their country rapidly lost influence, and the new state was molded by the Serbian monarchy, bureaucracy, and church according to their own interests. Members of other nationalities—Macedonians, Montenegrins, and particularly Croats—became second-class citizens, and the Serb intelligentsia itself was eliminated from political life. However, the combination of a parvenu bourgeoisie and a weak and petty monarchy proved unable to govern this country of flaming nationalities. In the ensuing years of strife and violence, the nationalist intellectuals began to be drawn in other directions. Some of them, particularly among the Montenegrins, looked to the example of the Russian Revolution as a way of ending the corrupt and incompetent rule in Belgrade. A considerable number of the ultranationalists thought they saw the wave of the future taking form in Fascist Italy and later in Nazi Germany. In general, the disaffected opted for one or

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the other of these extremes, and few intellectuals were attracted either by the possibility of social democracy or of enlightened anti-fascist conservatism.

The Spanish Civil War provided the final catalyst in this split. The ultranationalists joined Franco and the international fascist cause, while the Communists and left-wing populists rallied to the Spanish Republic. Under the leadership of Tito and others, Balkan students joined the international brigades, and hoped to continue the battle in Yugoslavia when they returned. Later, in the Yugoslav mountains, many of these "Spaniards"—who had been indoctrinated both in guerrilla warfare and Stalinism—were indeed to continue much the same battle which, just as in the countryside of Castile and Catalonia, was fought more ruthlessly against socialists and anarchists than against fascists.

IT IS ONLY OUT of this evolving heritage of religious, ethnic, and political fanaticism that the tragic figure of Milovan Djilas begins to emerge in anything like a true perspective. As a Montenegrin intellectual, Djilas's background was typically narrow, his education irregular and superficial. As a child of both his grim, virtually anarchic country and the fanatical, nihilistic tradition of Slavic radicalism, his instinct was always to rebel in the name of some abstract ideal of justice and truth against the existing laws of society and the prevailing forms of culture. Every new contact he made with the realm of ideals would press onward through a period of total belief to one of radical disaffection, provoking a new protest and renewed rebellion, without satisfaction or conclusion. His intransigent idealism has always been empowered less by the sentiment to construct than by the compulsion to destroy.

To Djilas, as to many of his pre-war comrades, Marxism appeared to be the only way out of the bog of relativism into which he had been led by his early confused groping with Western thinkers. As a coherent concept of the unfolding and fulfillment of history, Marxism offered him and his restless associates a new religion, complete with myths and regulations and opportunities for power, just at the time that they were emerging from a culture still possessed by an equally rigid but backward dogmatism—and they gave to their new creed an absolute authority that excluded the possibility of nuance, much less of doubt. Further, having seen the ideal of the national state betrayed into an ugly copy of the Western bourgeois establishment, Djilas and his generation, enamored of absolute justice and equality, were powerfully attracted to the promise of happiness that was already being prepared for in the Russia of Lenin and Stalin, where Slavs like themselves were finally solving the mystery of man's redemption.

Though Djilas was himself coldly critical of romantic Slavophilism, he relates that when he first saw Moscow he experienced a sense of kinship with his Montenegrin forebears, the prince-bishops like Njegos, who had frequently come to this city for aid and inspiration. His Marxism was thoroughly Russian—derived from the glosses of Lenin and Stalin and not from the original works of Marx and his Western interpreters. Only the Russian grasp of the revolutionary process seemed to him applicable to a country such as Montenegro where the basic issue, as he repeatedly has said, was how to bring justice into a society that had never known it. Moreover, any concept of justice that was meaningful to the Eastern Slavs would have to possess nothing less than the radiance of a universal, spiritual truth about human nature. Like Dostoevsky, Djilas would have little truck with the Western interpretation of justice, regarding it merely as an iron yoke of dehumanized formalism. On the other hand, in the distant Russia of the Bolsheviks, mankind was now experiencing the development of a truly human and equal justice.

Armed then with a crusading spirit that was fed and justified by Montenegrin tradition and Soviet propaganda, Djilas pursued his career in the Communist party. In prewar Yugoslavia he militantly rallied the student youth and quasi-intelligentsia and fought against any tendencies toward deviation. In Montenegro and in Bosnia during the war, and afterward throughout Yugoslavia, he was perhaps the most merciless of the party's persecutors and inquisitors, which is saying a good deal. Nothing seemed to stop him. My own impression of Djilas during those years was that of a man driven

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to persecute entirely by his violent passions and instincts, and by an unqualifiedly passionate faith in Stalinism. While many of his comrades were Stalinists out of cold resolution and *raison d'état,* Djilas was driven neither by personal opportunism nor national advantage. To him, Stalin was simply "the sun, without which the earth would freeze," and his support was that of the zealot who, though now in power, had never learned to deal with political reality in terms of pragmatic issues and responsible statesmanship.

Nor was he any less compromising when he finally realized in the late 1940's that Stalinism was a system of "profound internal contradictions," committed ineluctably to injustice and inequality. Though Djilas's conversion is usually associated with the break between Tito and Stalin, the truth is that he was the first and the most fervent in the councils of the party to advocate the reforms that came to be known as Titoism, just as he was the only important official who resisted, five years later, the "normalization of relations" between Moscow and Belgrade and the virtual return to the doctrines and policies, both domestic and foreign, of 1948. In the first instance as in the second, there was little in Djilas's revolt that can be ascribed to personal advantage. I have heard many of the Yugoslav heroes of Marxism admit that inasmuch as their goal of power has been achieved, disappointing as it may be, they do well to accept it. Krleza and Andric, for example, are content to live today in a state of affluence, and are uninterested in the ideas of those in power and in the conditions of the masses. To Djilas, who appears to have been first repelled by Stalinism in witnessing the corruption of the Bolshevik officials in Belgrade and who defected from Yugoslav Communism in opposition to the same processes taking place in its hierarchy, there has never been any possibility of temporizing. Always true to his character of the Montenegrin rebel, he repudiated the power he had helped to create and returned to poverty and eventually to prison. Almost alone, he followed a course of public criticism of the hierarchy and attacks upon its policies in the name of democratic reforms. What he hoped to gain during those brave months in 1953 is uncertain; but what is clear is that Djilas could do nothing other than continue to give witness to the falsehood of the old cause and continue to assert his willingness to risk his life for the new one.

Djilas's Bogomilian conversion has not touched the "new class," nor has it been cherished by the populace. The general feeling in Yugoslavia is that Djilas would lead his followers along a road which has no end. To those who never shared his earlier faith, he appears to be a useless and dangerous Don Quixote, capable of bringing about a tragedy even more cruel than the one through which they have already passed. If anything, they are inclined to ask—"Why did he not change things while he was in power, instead of now when he is playing the role of disarmed prophet?" In short, Djilas's influence would probably be utterly negligible were the Communists secure enough to refrain from throwing him in jail every time he gives an interview or writes a new book. Were he permitted to go abroad, Djilas would get the special reception that the West reserves for disarmed prophets: first recognition, then slow death. Meanwhile, the Communist police behave like the old Royalists in their stupidity and blindness.

YET THE ISSUE is not quite so simple. In the rank and file of the Yugoslav Communist world there is constant struggle. A Communist party out of harmony with the Communist world must be in a state of continuous tension. The old Stalinists were thrown in jail or expelled long ago; they are now doubly disreputable since Khrushchev has more or less adopted Tito's anti-Stalinist line. Those Stalinists who remain are coming to realize that the nature of their relations with Moscow and their ideological position must be reconsidered. Yet they also know that they cannot travel the road of Djilas—toward freedom of speech and social democracy—for despite the fact that Tito is now saying things similar to what Djilas began to say in the mid-50's (in one of his recent speeches, Tito berated the Yugoslav Communist establishment and its amoral behavior in even stronger terms than Djilas), he has never hinted at the possibility of a defection from Communism. Thus it is within the Communist framework

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that the Yugoslav intelligentsia believes it must work toward greater freedom.

In the eyes of Djilas, however, no good can ever come to Yugoslavia from the Communist state. For him, Communism—any kind of Communism—is death. "Those who wish to live and to survive in a world different from the one Stalin created, and which in essence and in full force still exists, must fight." These are his final words, so much his own, so much an echo of a self-isolated community of True Believers who have never ceased to struggle against the powers of darkness, both in the world and in themselves.

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* * *

THE MODERN RABBI

Jakob J. Petuchowski

"THE FAMILY OF Benjamin the Physician used to say: 'Of what use are the Rabbis to us? They never permitted us the raven, nor have they forbidden us the dove.' " Thus the Babylonian Talmud (*Sanhedrin* 99b, 100a) reports an early instance of the contemporary American Jewish parlor game of "rabbi baiting." Benjamin the Physician meant, evidently, that the sources of rabbinic decisions were as available to the layman as they are to the rabbis: for the Bible itself forbade eating ravens, while permitting the eating of doves. And the rabbis had done no tampering with the Biblical law, neither to mitigate it nor make it more stringent. The Talmudic report goes on to say, however, that when dietary questions of a doubtful nature arose in Benjamin's household, recourse was had to the rabbis, after all. In answering such questions, the rabbis did not fail to append a gloating reference to the rabbinate's usefulness to society.

But we moderns looking back can see that the ancient rabbinate did far more than hold the key to decisions in doubtful cases. They in fact adjusted more than one Biblical statute to the changing conditions of life, and to men's increasing moral sensitivity. They interpreted the *lex talionis,* for instance, in terms of monetary compensation; they virtually set aside the law governing the sabbatical year; and the "rebellious son" law (Deuteronomy 21: 18ff.) they spelled out in such a way as to make its application impossible. The marked aversion of the rabbis to capital punishment was evident in the restrictions they placed on the law concerning it—in contrast to the Bible, which rather freely commands that penalty. As to women, the rabbis allowed them many more rights than the Bible does, and in general the ancient rabbinate laid the foundation of a system of Bible interpretation which made of literalist fundamentalism a heresy.

All this the rabbis did on their authority as "interpreters" of Scripture, an authority which they held by virtue of having accumulated a great store of knowledge—and therefore wisdom. By trade a rabbi might be a woodchopper, a cobbler, a beer-brewer: it was his expertise in the knowledge of the sources which gained him his recognition as "rabbi." And so even a household as learned in the Bible as Benjamin's had from time to time to seek an expert rabbinical opinion.

If all this may be said about the rabbi of fifteen hundred years ago, the question arises: does his modern counterpart share with him anything more than the title? There have been many changes in the rabbinate since the time when Benjamin the Physician questioned its usefulness, and one of the greatest of all occurred when it became a profession in its own right. Maimonides, in the 12th century, still made his living as a physician while serving the cause of Judaism in an honorary capacity. It was around the 14th century that the general progress of specialization affected the rabbinate also, and the rabbi—at first not without qualms of conscience—became a paid official. Even then, he remained primarily the community's expert on Jewish sources: he was the judge deciding questions of civil law and of ritual on the basis of the over-all Jewish code, the teacher transmitting the sacred heritage to the next generation.

With the coming of Emancipation, in Western Europe (and America) the rabbinate took on a new function. Whether the Rabbi's label was "Orthodox," "Conservative," or "Reform," he more and more—emulating the Christian clergyman—found

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himself engaged in pastoral work, performing duties which had since time immemorial been deemed to be *mitzvoth,* incumbent upon *all* Jews. But, first and foremost, the rabbi became a preacher.

THERE HAVE always been preachers in Judaism—beginning with the Prophets themselves. We know that some of the early legalists treated their communities to homilies on Sabbath afternoons, just as many early rabbis also seem to have specialized in homiletics; and there is evidence in the rabbinic literature of an actual rivalry, at times, between legalists and preachers for the attention of their public. Yet though the synagogue has at no time been without its preachers, the older rabbi was not *necessarily* a preacher, nor the one who preached, a rabbi. For the most part, the popular preachers who traveled from *shtetel* to *shtetel* in Eastern Europe, regaling congregations with their homiletical skill on Sabbath afternoons, were content to be auxiliary —and subsidiary—to the rabbi.

The rabbi himself preached but twice a year—on the Sabbath before Passover, and on the Sabbath before the Day of Atonement; even then, his sermons, dealing with the laws of the imminent Holy Days, were more didactic than edifying. The modern rabbi, on the other hand, has been a preacher primarily. It was the rabbi's sermon that sounded the battle cry of Reform —or rallied the faithful to the defense of Tradition. It was in the sermon that the "eternal verities of Judaism" were crystallized and distilled for the benefit of a generation which no longer engaged in private Jewish study. In the sermon, too, the rabbi had the chance to exhibit his secular learning and culture, and to prove to his congregation that English (or earlier, German) could be spoken without the trace of an accent. From there, it was but a small step for the modern rabbi to appear before non-Jewish audiences as "ambassador" of the Jewish community—and in so doing, incidentally, furnish compelling proof that a Jew was endowed with neither horns nor hooves. In truth, the impression a candidate for rabbinical office would be likely to make in the Gentile world was—perhaps still is—often the decisive criterion for his employment.

As to the value of "sermonic" Judaism itself, opinions have always differed. A generation ago, Franz Rosenzweig expressed criticism of the rabbi who had "left behind the sober air of daily learning," and become "more or less dependent upon preaching, a preaching, incidentally, which he can direct only rarely to the large mass of his congregation, a preaching, therefore, without echo." Rosenzweig adds that "the preacher acts as if he had been asked. But none has asked him. And thus, also from the point of view of the content, all he says seems empty."*

There are rabbis in contemporary America who share Franz Rosenzweig's serious doubts about preaching—though not necessarily for Rosenzweig's reasons. Naturally, those rabbis who are good at preaching, who can "pack them in" and hold a congregation spellbound, do not underestimate the value of the sermon. Yet it would not be charitable, nor even precise, to suggest that the rabbis who tend to derogate the sermon are simply indifferent preachers. For there has been one further change in the development of the modern rabbinate which has yet to be noted.

The sermons of the last generation—whatever their other merits or faults—were, by and large, preached by men with burning religious convictions. The modern American Jewish scene, on the other hand, has become familiar with the rabbi whose own religious commitment is somewhat less than total. Within Reform and Conservative Judaism a new breed of rabbi has appeared, men competent as "technicians" and "group workers," but evidently beset by doubts as to the basic affirmations of theistic religion—even in its radical "classical" Reform variety. If they are not in the majority, they do exist, and have met with not much opposition from the laity. It can hardly be expected that the "preaching" of these rabbis should be as inspired as the "preaching" of the earlier, God-intoxicated homileticians.

The sermon, indeed, has come by many to be rated far below another activity, one which has increasingly absorbed the modern American rabbi's attention and time: namely, counseling. The rabbi as counselor

* Nahum N. Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig—His Life and Thought.*

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is a composite of a number of ingredients. To the extent that the rabbi of an older day used to be concerned with the laws of personal status, he was as a matter of course often involved in the critical moments of his congregants' lives. For example, while Talmudic law makes divorce possible, Talmudic morality tends to discourage it; and it was the rabbi's duty to try vigorously to patch up matters, resorting to divorce only when everything else had failed. The rabbi would also visit and console the sick, though no more than any other Jew, since it was a *mitzvah*. Most directly involved in counseling was the East European Hasidic *rebbe*, whose advice was sought by his followers in all their affairs, from a guilty conscience to a childless marriage. The modern Western rabbi rather tended to imitate his Christian counterpart in the "concern for souls" (*Seelsorge*). Then came Psychology. In the United States, particularly, the rabbi eagerly availed himself of its new insights and techniques. To be sure, the rabbinical seminaries keep urging their students to refer cases in need of a specialist's treatment to a specialist: still many a rabbi finds himself cast in the role of the amateur psychiatrist, and many a congregant finds it cheaper to forsake the psychiatrist's couch for the rabbi's study. A variation is the rabbi who likes to spice his utterances with psychiatric jargon, and who finds that Judaism is valuable to modern man because, in so many instances, Jewish religious literature is said to have anticipated Freud. But even where a rabbi has undergone specialized training in order to be of some real use in psychiatric counseling, he may be left with a problem of his own: when, if at all, does he figure as "rabbi"—the representative authority for certain absolute standards governing morals and interpersonal relations? If not, if he cannot be this kind of figure, is he still an honest "rabbi"? Fortunately, the dilemma is not too common: most of our rabbis in their counseling activities do not pretend to usurp the psychiatrist's function, and they are indeed useful to their congregants insofar as they are looked up to as the authority for a basic system of morality.

One word more needs to be said about still another new function of the contemporary rabbi. I do not refer to his role as a teacher of children or adults, where he differs from his medieval predecessor only in techniques. I mean his role as ritual functionary, the director of services of worship, and especially of domestic ceremonies. The old-time rabbi did not "officiate" at circumcisions (unless he was the *mohel*), or tombstone unveilings, or affixing the *mezuzah* to his congregants' doorposts. Strictly speaking, once the legal technicalities had been cleared with him, he did not even have to "officiate" at a wedding. Rabbinic Judaism was basically a layman's religion. Our modern rabbis are all too often regarded as priests and the responsibility for this unwholesome state of affairs is not always the layman's.

NOW, YOUNG MEN may have various reasons for seeking a career in the modern rabbinate; and once he has been ordained, a rabbi may choose to stress one rather than another aspect of the ministry: no single man can excel in all functions. But one thing all rabbis have in common: the desire to communicate, to be leaders and spokesmen. It is, therefore, not surprising that many of our rabbis have felt the urge to publish books —particularly of their sermons. I should like here to examine a number of such recent books which may illustrate some of the points about the modern rabbinate that I have made above.

In *Length of Our Days—Focus on Judaism and the Personal Life* (Bloch, 103 pp., $3.00), Rabbi Sol Landau devotes two chapters to the history and the present role of the rabbinate. He notes that "the majority of American Jews are not at all certain what the exact role of the rabbi is. This is not only due to lack of historical information, but also because the rabbi does not represent to them the actual world they live in." To overcome this handicap, Rabbi Landau suggests that the counseling role is "the rabbi's most acceptable opportunity to reach his people." But he is also careful to point out that "this does not minimize the continuing place as preacher and teacher in the pulpit and classroom." Rabbi Landau is on the whole eager to demonstrate that the modern rabbinate is not radically different from the rabbinate of antiquity. "It seems to me," he says, "that the real change in the function of the rabbinate is one of emphasis."

Rabbi Kurt Klappholz, author of *The*

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Power Within Us (the Torah Institute, Brooklyn, 93 pp., $2.95), would probably not disagree with Landau's notion of the rabbinate, though his own particular contribution seems to lie in an adaptation of the Norman Vincent Peale type of "Positive Thinking"—Klappholz calls his version "Constructive Thinking." The following words from his preface give an indication of the book's style throughout:

> The human dilemma of today has been properly summed up by Jascha Heifetz, illustrious American violinist, who remarked: "Man is always trying to make something for himself rather than something of himself." In this book the author aims to offer guideposts for creative and purposeful living through constructive thinking. He humbly endeavors to show what religion can do for us in terms of personal happiness and inner peace, so vital to healthful living in our time.

The book is studded with such other authorities as James Bender, Joshua L. Liebman, Joseph H. Hertz, Judge Cooper, Spinoza, Charles Kingsley, Benjamin Abrams, Emmet Fox, George Washington Carver, Abraham Lincoln, Drs. Lawrence Hinkle Jr. and Norman Plumer, G. K. Chesterton, Will Rogers, Disraeli, Albert Schweitzer, Norman Vincent Peale, Theodore Parker, William Penn, R. Elimech of Lizansk, Maimonides, R. Nahman of Bratzlav, Montefiore, Judah Halevi, and H. Pereira Mendes. More often than not, these "authorities" merely help to dignify a simple platitude: we read, for example, that "Religion, in the opinion of Disraeli, should be the rule of life, not a casual incident of it"; or, "Religion, in the words of Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, like all good things, needs to be shared with others."

Nevertheless, *The Power Within Us* is a most significant book, for the reason that its author is an Orthodox rabbi. The homely truths he propounds, derived from the sources of traditional Judaism, are here presented with the *imprimatur* of the excommunicated Spinoza, the baptized Disraeli, the Reform Joshua L. Liebman, and the anti-Semitic G. K. Chesterton. The reading public, the author realizes, has gone beyond "the four cubits of the Halachah"—the teachings of Judaism have now to be judged by the criteria of Western thought. Klappholz speaks of "Religion's pragmatic usefulness in terms of personal happiness and inner peace."

Liebman's *Peace of Mind*—a much more thoughtful and provocative book than Klappholz's—is, of course, already dated, and Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* has come in for its share of adverse criticism among more theologically minded Protestants. But, then, the book by Klappholz exemplifies an axiomatic truth of Jewish development: *Wie es sich christelt, so juedelt es sich*—translated freely, As the Christians go, so go the Jews; there is of course an inevitable time lag before the Jews "catch on."

THE rabbi as "ambassador" to the non-Jewish community seems to be the role most highly rated by Rabbi Harry Joshua Stern, in his collected sermons and addresses, entitled *Entrusted with Spiritual Leadership* (Bloch, 120 pp., $3.00). Again and again Rabbi Stern points with pride to the annual Institute on Judaism for the Christian Clergy which his congregation has been holding for many a year. He sees in it "a unique fruitage of fellowship between Catholics, Jews, and Protestants," and even "something, too, of the reality of Isaiah's prophecy that 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.' " And he even detects in the participation of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, together with Catholic and Protestant ecclesiastics, in the ceremonies at President Eisenhower's inauguration, the "fruit of our inter-faith work."

Rabbi William B. Silverman addresses himself to the American public at large in *God Help Me!* (Macmillan, 294 pp., $4.95). His is not the task of explaining Judaism to the non-Jew, but of rallying both Jew and non-Jew "From Kindergarten Religion to the Radical Faith," as the subtitle of his book has it. "Kindergarten Religion" includes anthropomorphic views of God, fundamentalist views of Revelation, and such traditionalist beliefs as those in Resurrection and Original Sin. (Rabbi Silverman's impartiality manifests itself in his rejection of the third chapter of Genesis together with its Christian interpretation.) The "Radical Faith" consists of good 19th-century liberalism with an application of the Social Gospel. Silverman takes "Pro-

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phetic Religion" seriously, and confronts the conscience of modern man with the actual demands of the hour. He spices his presentation with, among other things, Hasidic tales, and he has read Buber's *I and Thou*. Still, non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is for him a striking argument against the traditional belief in Revelation —by which one may gauge the depth of his theological understanding.

THE BOOKS by Landau, Klappholz, Stern, and Silverman—which by no means exhaust the current output—spell out some of the preoccupations and inclinations of the American rabbinate. They also show the Rabbis' concern for their place and their function. In the privacy of his conscience, if nowhere else, the rabbi has to justify his existence: if he is no longer the authoritative interpreter of the Word of God, he must needs fulfill some other function entitling him to his position and his salary. As we have seen, the rabbi on occasion finds himself threatened in his job of work by competitors. If, for example, he regards counseling as his major effort, there are, after all, psychiatric counselors whose whole training has been in this field and who have, in the world at large, rightly or wrongly, a greater reputation for professional competence. Nor does the rabbi enjoy an undisputed monopoly on interfaith work: thousands of dollars annually are given to "defense agencies," run largely by laymen—and secularists, at that.

Here, the future may see the rabbi come into his own. After all, the Jewish counterpart to Christian *religious* bodies can only be the rabbinate—and not Jewish organizations which at best tolerate Judaism. When all is said and done, all will depend on how the American Jewish community looks upon itself: whether as a secular-ethnic grouping, or, primarily, as a religious community on the analogy of the Catholic and Protestant churches. In the process of clarification that is still going on, the rabbi's major function as religious leader would surely seem to be his firmest ground. Yet it is precisely in his role of *religious* leader that the American rabbi has come in for criticism.

Much of that criticism is behind his back. But one layman has rushed into print. S. Michael Gelber, in *The Failure of the American Rabbi* (Twayne Publishers, 79 pp., $2.75), holds the rabbi responsible for the boredom from which the layman suffers in Reform and "left-wing" Conservative synagogues. Mr. Gelber does not like the new modern prayers nor the order of service, he would prefer a different seating arrangement, and more color in the vestments of both officiating clergy and laity. Perhaps the rabbi is not solely responsible for all the wrongs attributed to him, and perhaps also the improvements suggested by Mr. Gelber would not suit the taste of all congregants. But Mr. Gelber does make three strong points: (1) he finds the sermons to which he is subjected empty and careless; (2) he would like to see laymen take over more of the routine duties of the rabbinate, and thus free the rabbi for higher intellectual endeavors; and (3) he would like to see the Reform and "left-wing" Conservative rabbis do something about daily prayer.

Mr. Gelber's three points are not unrelated. A man can only "preach" if he himself has beliefs and convictions; if so, he will also want to pray, and if he wants to *say* something, he will derive the right to say it from his greater learning. (The rabbi is not a member of a hereditary priesthood.) Indeed, Mr. Gelber's indictment of the rabbinate reminds us of still another necessary aspect: the rabbi as student.

From Eastern Europe comes the story of a complaint: someone passed by the rabbi's house shortly before midnight and saw that the lights had already been extinguished. The rabbi was not studying enough!—after all, it was for the time he spent studying that the congregation paid his salary.

American congregations, generally, do not look upon their rabbis in this light. Rare, indeed, is the rabbi of a congregation who is also a student. If he is, he will find that he has to "steal" the time for studying. And many rabbis with scholarly pretensions are to be found on the faculties of the rabbinical seminaries and the universities. Thus the rabbinate often attracts men with little interest in Jewish learning. One can hear rabbinical students gripe: "I want to become a rabbi in order to help people. Why should I waste my time on Aramaic grammar?" And not just Aramaic—the complaint too often extends to studies in Bible and Talmud.

Here we have a vicious circle. Congrega-

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tions expect their rabbis to have finished being scholars. Men with no scholarly interests are attracted to the rabbinate. The congregations get the men they have sought. In the process, the rabbinate gradually ceases to be a learned profession, rabbis are worried about their source of authority (nor can they communicate, on the same level, with members of their congregation who are trained specialists in, for example, scientific fields), and, here and there, a layman puts the question of Benjamin the Physician: "Of what use are the rabbis to us?"

In the final analysis, whatever other functions the rabbi might choose to undertake, it is his role as student and scholar which is the justification of his profession. This is inherent in the nature of Judaism itself—at least of the kind of Judaism which the ancient rabbis called into being as a non-priestly layman's religion. It may well be that the drive toward specialization, affecting all areas of our life today, has made the professional rabbinate a necessity. But the rabbi who sees his major function in anything but the field of Jewish learning and education is a usurper in terms of the tradition he purports to represent.

It would be easy to say that there are many ways of serving the Jewish and the general community, and that men who want to be of help to others, but lack an interest in Jewish learning, should not make the rabbinate their career. But unless and until the congregations themselves insist upon this conception of the rabbinate, there is little hope of seeing Mr. Gelber's demands met.

To what extent may Mr. Gelber's book be regarded as a straw in the wind? One thing is certain—when more laymen of Mr. Gelber's caliber become vocal, we may look forward to a raising of standards all around, to a greater participation of the laity (and, who knows, to the ultimate abolition of the very "un-Jewish" concept of "laity" altogether), and to the inevitable restoration of the rabbi to his sole rightful place—that of the authority on Judaism within the community.

JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI *is associate professor of Rabbinics at Hebrew Union College. His book,* Ever Since Sinai, *was published in 1961 by Scribe.*

RAYMOND CHANDLER, PRIVATE EYE

Richard Schickel

IN READING *Raymond Chandler Speaking,** a collection of the late mystery writer's letters and literary fragments, one gets a sense of the peculiar loneliness of the writer of integrity who works in a popular genre that attracts few writers like himself and that the American literary culture tends to dismiss with easy, contemptuous generalizations. Chandler was a talented and devoted craftsman, one who spent his life either in spurts of hard work on his novels or in long periods of lying fallow and brooding about the lack of serious understanding and appreciation with which his work was received. Of non-literary topics, only cats—traditional companions of the lonely and disaffected—appear to have interested Chandler very deeply.

It is from the letters in this volume—about two hundred in all, addressed mainly to publishers, agents, and fellow writers of popular fiction—that one senses the kind of isolation that Chandler experienced during his career. In one letter he writes as follows:

> A thriller writer in England, if he is good enough, is just as good as anyone else. There is none of that snobbism which makes a fourth-rate serious novelist, without style or any real talent, superior to the mystery writer. . . . I don't think somehow we shall ever reach that status in America. . . . I'm afraid our instinct for classification is too strong.

At the same time, this feeling of being left out, of working at a vocation in which one's best and most conscientious efforts were underrated and misunderstood, can also be seen to have informed Chandler's fiction.

His great theme was not crime and punishment, though his letters reveal him to have had a sound technical knowledge of criminal history, psychology, and technique. His theme was, rather, an exploration of the belief that the moral man, who refuses to play the game of life in a conventionally immoral or amoral way, is doomed to the

* Edited by Dorothy Gardiner and Kathrine Sorley Walker, Houghton Mifflin, 271 pp., $4.00.

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kind of loneliness Chandler himself suffered.

This understanding of Chandler and his theme provides, in turn, for speculation about the decline of a once promising figure in popular mythology, the private eye. As created by Dashiell Hammett and developed by Chandler, this figure offered a unique perspective on loneliness as a central condition of modern urban existence. Philip Marlowe, Chandler's detective, masked his feeling of emptiness behind a protective set of tough-guy mannerisms, and it is because Chandler's legion of imitators borrowed them, but not Marlowe's inner spirit, that the hard school is no longer very interesting. The books are sometimes amusing as puzzles, but nothing about them catches in the mind. Marlowe did.

The successors to Marlowe lead lives of breath-taking excitement. One races headlong through the books, borne mindlessly along by a succession of cheap thrills. Marlowe, like his creator, was a plodder, the intensity of his dangerous moments heightened by the contrast with the lonely boredom of his normal life. This gave Chandler the opportunity to write about boredom, that great modern subject, without ultimately becoming boring himself. A quick turn of the plot always saved him and the reader from ennui.

Except for these flashes of excitement, Marlowe was very much the average unmarried lower-middle-class citizen of a great American city. There is genuine poignancy in the lot of these people. Their work has brought them to the city but does not reward them sufficiently to enjoy its pleasures. Barred from the fashionable world, yet given tantalizing glimpses of it, they bury their envy in the routine amusements of movies, television, and drinking in bars, and discover that these cannot completely deaden desire.

Chandler was a master of this milieu. Of today's serious writers, only Graham Greene has given us a comparable rendering of the habits and habitats of the individual at loose ends in a great city. Greene came, in time, to see the squalor of the bed-sitting room as a symbol of man's alienation from God. Chandler never went quite that far. A striving for faith becomes the moral imperative in Greene's later work. A gruff, typically American sentimentality is Chandler's equivalent to it. It is pragmatic and limited; it says no more than that everybody has the right to be left alone. So, with Chandler, mood becomes dominant, and response to it is everything in the appreciation of his work.

The atmosphere of cheap furnished apartments, of second-rate bars where one can always find a conversation and sometimes a woman, the very feel of an empty city street to the man who has just killed the evening alone in a second-run movie house, are done with wonderful rightness. So are the psychic defenses of the lonely man. Marlowe plays endless games of chess with himself, carefully setting up the classic problems, then spending the evening trying to solve them, sipping at a bourbon highball. He is persnickety, in an old-maidish way, about small things like coffee. The careful construction of an ideal cup of it occupies a lovingly written paragraph in almost every Marlowe novel. In fact, popular misapprehension to the contrary, Marlowe is more interested in good coffee than he is in booze, good or otherwise. Nor is Marlowe much of a boudoir athlete. He is rather offhand about women, perhaps a little defensive. Physically, of course, he needs them, but emotionally he knows they pose a threat to his independence. Consequently, he is wary, though gallant, in his treatment of them.

BUT WHY, since Marlowe is reasonably attractive, reasonably intelligent, does he do nothing to change his lot? Chandler answers this question in one of his letters, stating explicitly what is implicit in the novels.

> If being in revolt against a corrupt society constitutes being immature, then Philip Marlowe is extremely immature. If seeing dirt where there is dirt constitutes an inadequate social adjustment, then Philip Marlowe has inadequate social adjustment. Of course Marlowe is a failure and usually he knows it. He is a failure because he hasn't any money. A man who without physical handicaps cannot make a decent living is always a failure and usually a moral failure. But a lot of very good men have been failures because their particular talents did not suit their time and place.

The trouble with Marlowe's successors in fiction and in the mass media is that their talents all too well suit their time and place.

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The very presence of Marlowe in his shabby suit in his seedy office in unfashionable downtown Los Angeles was a criticism of the fast operators who were always trying to enlist his honesty in support of their crooked, but frequently respectable-seeming, schemes. One can only wonder what poor old Marlowe would have thought of well-groomed Efrem Zimbalist, Jr. and his fancy layout at "77 Sunset Strip." Probably he would have suspected him of fronting a numbers racket.

WHERE Chandler set out to record the experience of urban loneliness, his successors, for the most part, merely cater to that experience, offering ready-made daydreams to help the sufferer while away the lonely stretch from the end of dinner to bedtime. These detectives seem only accidentally to be on the side of morality; so shifty are their standards that one can as easily imagine them working for "the syndicate" (a fantasy creation in itself, and one that Chandler had no truck with) as against it. They live too fast and too well, they tumble into bed too easily with the proliferation of unbelievably desirable women who people their books. They are insiders in an affluent society. Marlowe was always outside and his conflicts had a dimension beyond the simple one of cops *vs.* robbers.

When he finished the first draft of his most solid piece of work, *The Long Goodbye,* Chandler wrote:

> What is largely boring about mystery stories, at least on a literate plane, is that the characters get lost about a third of the way through. Often the opening, the *mise en scène,* the establishment of the background, is very good. Then the plot thickens and the people become mere names. Well, what can you do to avoid this? You can write constant action and that is fine if you really enjoy it. But alas, one grows up, one becomes complicated and unsure, one becomes interested in moral dilemmas, rather than in who cracked who on the head. . . . Anyhow I wrote [*The Long Goodbye*] as I wanted to because I can do that now. I don't care *whether the mystery was fairly obvious,* but I cared about the people, about this strange corrupt world we live in, and how any man who tried to be honest looks in the end either sentimental or plain foolish.

The two great private detectives of the hard school, Marlowe and Hammett's Sam Spade, were both code heroes, like those of Hemingway (whose style also had its influence on that school). As Leslie Fiedler has pointed out, Hemingway's heroes bear more than a superficial resemblance to the Western heroes of popular culture. Consciously or unconsciously, the classic private eye represents an attempt to transfer the man with a code from the lost Eden of the 19th-century American West to the modern Jungle of the Cities. Hammett was the first to make the attempt in the pulp magazines of the 20's. His original private eye, the Continental Op, discovered that his code of personal conduct, which consisted mostly of "doing the job," was inadequate to cope with the magnitude of the evil opposed to him. Hammett, a leftist, regarded moral evil as economically determined, and though his detective remained apolitical, his books, nevertheless, drew a political lesson. Since Hammett was a writer first and a political animal second, during the four years in which he wrote his novels he never tried to supply his heroes with social consciousness. Rather, they seemed to cling more and more desperately to the code of "the job." Sam Spade actually turns in his girl to the police rather than defile the code. Hammett himself, however, grew increasingly aware of the distance between the code and his political beliefs. He wrote "The Thin Man," a slick crime comedy with no moral tow whatever, in 1932, and then fell silent, unable to bridge the gap between his special skills as a writer and his political beliefs. In 1939 Chandler published his first novel, *The Big Sleep,* and introduced Marlowe to the world. His tales would not be as bloody or as smoothly fast-moving as Hammett's, but Marlowe would prove to be a character of more depth than any Hammett ever created.

Marlowe rarely tangled with the kind of organized crime that the Continental Op encountered in *Red Harvest.* He was called upon only to pit his private morality against private immorality. Even so, the literary left tried to claim Marlowe for its own, tried to invest his struggle against evil with political significance. Chandler resented this deeply. As far as he was concerned, politics was merely an extension of criminality by legal, but certainly not moral, means; he never fell

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victim to the kind of inner conflict that silenced Hammett.

Still, like it or not, Marlowe was a class figure. He was most believable when there were distinct differences between the styles of the rich, or at least upper middle class, and lower middle class. He began to seem a little out of place in the prosperous 50's, when even college professors were being cut in on the wealthiest society in human history. His stubborn refusal to join up with the rest of society seemed more eccentric than heroic, more adolescent than mature. Ian Fleming's James Bond, that cold, amoral, elegant killer, replaced Marlowe as our prime fictional detective. Curiously, in the fragment of the novel which Chandler left unfinished when he died in 1959, he had married Marlowe off—to an heiress, no less. The idea was not his; it was a friend's. But it is easy to see why it had a certain appeal to the writer. Besides giving him a new situation in which to place his man, it also made him seem less unnatural. Marlowe had begun to suffer from cultural lag.

Chandler was not happy with the marriage although he gave it a good try. "The contest between what she wants Marlowe to do and what he will insist on doing will make a good subplot," he insisted in one note. "I don't know how it will turn out, but she'll never tame him."

This was the first entirely new novel Chandler attempted after the death of his wife, an event which had sent him off on a monumental drunk and a bungled suicide attempt; and there is something touching about his attempt to give Marlowe the marital stability he had enjoyed but which he had now lost. The symbiotic relationship between a writer and an ongoing character has rarely been made more clear, and there is, obviously, a relationship between Chandler's dedication as a writer and Marlowe's as a detective. They are different manifestations of the same impulse to professionalism.

The last letter in the present collection is to the friend who had suggested marriage for Marlowe, and by now Chandler has strong reservations about the match. Chandler writes:

> A fellow of Marlowe's type shouldn't get married, because he is a lonely man, a poor man, a dangerous man, and yet a sympathetic man, and somehow none of this goes with marriage. I think he will always have a fairly shabby office, a lonely house, a number of affairs, but no permanent connection. I think he will always be awakened at some inconvenient hour by some inconvenient person to do some inconvenient job. It seems to me that this is his destiny—possibly not the best destiny in the world, but it belongs to him. No one will ever beat him, because by his nature he is unbeatable. No one will ever make him rich, because he is destined to be poor. But somehow, I think he would not have it otherwise. . . . I see him always in a lonely street, in lonely rooms, puzzled but never quite defeated. . . .

It is a measure of the specific gravity of Chandler's creation that the writer's final summing up of the Marlowe character does not seem pretentious and that in his work there is ample evidence to support it. It is a measure of the private eye's decline that no fictional operative today could possibly elicit such a description. Chandler, in his concern with the real psychological issues of his time, and in his ability to focus these issues by his excellent anti-hero, was at least the equal of a middle rank "serious" novelist—perhaps the equal, on occasion, of a first-rate one.

RICHARD SCHICKEL'S *article, "The Television Problem," appeared in our December 1962 issue. Mr. Schickel is a free lance writer, author of the recent book,* The Stars.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

On "Letting Go"

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Irving Feldman, in his review of Philip Roth's *Letting Go* [September 1962] . . . avoids a direct consideration of the novel by comparing it to Flaubert's *Sentimental Education*. . . . Mr. Feldman uses the comparative method to escape the effort of comprehension . . . he hides behind the very doubtful assertion that the similar patterning of the books was "perhaps inevitable" . . . without a scintilla of proof. In the absence of documented evidence, the comparison would be "inevitable" only if Mr. Feldman revealed such significant similarities as to persuade us of the inevitability. He does not. He mentions common qualities such as "bitter reality," "disillusionment," and sex, but he never explores or revealingly defines these general likenesses. The comparison, then, is executed throughout on the crude and mechanical plot level (with only a fragment of one parallel scene discussed in any detail). . . .

This sterile technique of evading meaningful analysis is most fully displayed when Mr. Feldman quotes a passage from *Letting Go* and comments upon it in this manner: "The text is from Kierkegaard, Paul's gesture and vision from Camus, there is perhaps a little Sartre, and, certainly, a lot of 'Seize the Day.' " This tells us absolutely nothing! . . . If it gives any information at all, it is that Irving Feldman reads books as if they were concocted from intellectually impressive recipes. Are we to imagine that all of Philip Roth's artistic achievement (which is doubtless considerable) boils down to a dash of Kierkegaard, a spice of Camus, and a grain of Sartre? . . . And isn't Mr. Feldman embarrassed by the fact that he can write this sentence and then go on to deprecate a scene in *Letting Go* because it is "so cluttered with literary furniture"?

Finally . . . Mr. Feldman . . . interprets the 630 pages of the book as adding up to this exhortation: "don't clutch, don't push and pull, and let go—that is, fail in order to seize the day." This kind of razor-blade ad nonsense is the fruit of Mr. Feldman's searching and appreciative analysis. Would that [Mr. Feldman] had read, in Commentary [November 1960] Alfred Kazin's observation that in order to succeed a critic must "possess . . . through the integral force of his intelligence, the work of art that someone else has created."

Sadly, the only thing Mr. Feldman possessed was the 630 printed pages.

Leonard Port

Mazomanie, Wisconsin

To the Editor of Commentary:

It is very reassuring to the reader to know that reviewer Irving Feldman is so well acquainted with Kafka, Flaubert, Kierkegaard, Camus, Gide, Bellow, and Sartre. There must, of course, be a host of other authors whom Mr. Feldman could cite if he had time and space, but may I suggest that in reviewing a book it is a good idea to practice "letting go" of schoolroom techniques and deal specifically with the artistic and literary merit of the work in hand.

(Mrs.) Martin M. Perley

Louisville, Kentucky

To the Editor of Commentary:

The review of Philip Roth's book . . . does not at all convey the beauty of his insights or the fidelity and excellence with which they are communicated. Instead, the review . . . rambles through irrelevant and sometimes inaccurate criticisms. Despite what Feldman says, the characters *do* have friends, careers, jobs, and these *do* connect them with the world at large—even if the 1956 Hungarian Revolution does not merit headlines in the book. Why should the novel have a "cramped and fetid" air just because everything allegedly takes place, "indoors, in apartments, in offices," etc.? Because Roth's characters live in Chicago or New York, as millions of others do, and enact their roles indoors, in apartments, does it render their behavior less vital? . . .

Kurt Haas

New Paltz, New York

Mr. Feldman *writes:*

Maybe Mr. Port and Mrs. Perley are really serious, but they sound very much like kibitzers. I don't find that they disagree

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with the concrete remarks my review made about *Letting Go,* they just don't like the way I played my hand and want to advise me on Critical Principles and Methods in Reviewing Books. Mr. Port's version of my review is, moreover, elaborately garbled. Since I can't reconstruct the entire review for him, let me give Mr. Port one small sample of what my review said.

The passage that Mr. Port quotes as ending with ". . . and, certainly, a lot of 'Seize the Day,'" continues: "But the Absurd here seems to me quite beside the point and helps make this passage shrill and unconvincing. The healing, the joining of the man of duty (Abraham) and of feeling (Isaac) can take place because the funeral is a public event." I did *not* "then go on to deprecate a scene in *Letting Go* because it is 'so cluttered with literary furniture.'" This was, in fact, how I had characterized the scene from which I proceeded to liberate all these literary moths. Now: did this say "nothing about Philip Roth?" Did Mr. Port *not* find this climactic passage in *Letting Go* trumped up, shrill, and unconvincing? Does Mr. Port think I've invented these literary allusions or does he agree that the Roth passage is moth-eaten with them? Mr. Port's letter nowhere disagrees with my conclusions. Then perhaps he agrees? (Ditto Mrs. Perley.) If so, he ought to lodge his complaints not with me but with Mr. Roth, as I did. If Mr. Port and Mrs. Perley really think that I failed to understand or appreciate this work, their letters ought to have furnished the praise and understanding they think proper. This might do *Letting Go* some real service. As it is, I'm afraid they were only trying to express themselves.

Mr. Haas makes one real point. . . . He categorically denies the accuracy of one section of my review. I haven't changed my mind and can only categorically reaffirm my original statements and leave it to the reader to decide. No doubt, millions who live in New York or Chicago apartments have vital lives. I can see quite well in the vague poem Mr. Haas seems to be writing in his mind this grand and public vision. The trouble is there isn't enough of this vitality and vision in the novel Mr. Roth wrote.

Peirce Reconsidered

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his article on Peirce ["American Pragmatism Reconsidered," Aug. '62] Professor Aiken interprets Peirce's "scholastic realism" to connote a belief in the existence of "real generals" apart from things. Professor Aiken wonders why Peirce with his scientific background would have anything to do with "such a hoary doctrine of traditional metaphysics."

Peirce does frequently refer to his acceptance of scholastic realism but on close examination it is not the scholastic realism that Professor Aiken thinks it to be. . . . Professor Aiken ascribes to Peirce's scholastic realism a view that entails the existence of universals apart from any manifestation in things. . . . But does Peirce mean his scholastic realism to be so interpreted? . . .

Peirce's scholastic realism [rejects] any notion of *universalia ante rem.* Relations for Peirce may be objective or external to the mind, but they are not disembodied "reals" endowed with a wraithlike existence. They do not exist apart from the things that they relate. But insofar as they do relate things outside of the mind, they do have a real existence which is discovered by the mind.

The importance for the predictability of scientific propositions and of experiment of such real relations is for Peirce self-evident. The positivistic scientist who asserts the existence of only particulars contradicts himself with each experiment he makes. Perhaps the clarification of Peirce's realism as a realism entailing *universalia* (or relations) *inter res* rather than *universalia ante rem* may make his position more comprehensible and therefore acceptable.

Robert W. Hall
Department of Philosophy and Religion
University of Vermont
Burlington, Vermont

Mr. Aiken *writes:*

I think that Professor Hall has misunderstood the point of my discussion of Peirce's metaphysical realism, though this may be due to the manner of my expression in the opening paragraph of my treatment of the topic. I was in fact more interested in the problem of the logical status of Peirce's commitment to "general runs" and in the significance, from a pragmatic point of view, of metaphysical theses generally than in the technical details which distinguish Peirce's own version of realism from other forms of the doctrine. I did, however, say that Peirce accepts only a "variant" of the Platonic doctrine of universals; within the context of my essay, which had other axes to grind, it seemed less essential to spell out all of the "technical" details of the Scotist variant which Peirce accepts.

I am not the first reader of Peirce who has

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wondered, initially, about Peirce's stake, as a pragmatist and as a scientific philosopher, in the metaphysical controversy over universals. Nor am I the first whose wonder has been intensified by Peirce's own highly disparaging comments upon the emptiness of (most) "ontological metaphysics." But, as my essay makes clear, I, at least, stayed for an answer, and I came eventually to the conclusion that Peirce was right in parting company with the positivists who regard the whole controversy over universals as merely a tissue of logical and semantical confusion and of (scientifically) unverifiable speculation. I argued that it is no accident that Peirce (usually) regards his metaphysical realism as an integral part of his Pragmaticism, and that he himself misrepresents it—just as he often misrepresents other metaphysical theses to which he is addicted—when he treats it, as he sometimes does, as a confirmable scientific hypothesis. On the contrary, as a part of his pragmatism, it belongs rather to the framework of thought and expression which a commitment to science, as the pre-emptive vehicle of human knowledge, involves. From this standpoint, the basic error of Platonists in all ages consists precisely in the tendency to treat the belief *in* general runs as tantamount to a belief that general runs are things or objects, albeit of a rather queer sort, whose apprehension involves a peculiar form of (intellectual) intuition. This, in my judgment, is precisely what happens in any sphere of discourse when the principles governing it are taken as parts of the body of knowledge which they superintend. Peirce himself sees the point, in principle, when he contrasts the pragmatic maxim as the statement of a method of analysis and interpretation with the statements for which it purports to provide a principle of interpretation. Such an error, so I believe, is largely responsible for the unnecessary discrediting of metaphysics as a whole in the eyes of those who, like the positivists, rightly reject the notion of a positive metaphysical superscience whose "truths" are nonetheless beyond the powers of scientific procedures to verify. I thus precisely did *not* maintain that Peirce's general runs are "disembodied 'reals' endowed with a wraithlike existence." I contended, on the contrary, that this commitment to them is, by his own admission, to be construed as an aspect of his dedication to the highly substantial and unwraithlike activity of science itself. As such it is a commitment exactly on a par with the commitment to the "reality" of numbers. In the ordinary course, such a commitment goes without saying. It becomes a significant commitment, however, in the face of, and in rebuke to, those who refuse to take with absolute seriousness those practices involving mathematical computation or who maintain that "existentially" mathematical discourses are not matters of basic human concern.

In his final paragraph, Professor Hall states that "The positivistic scientist who asserts the existence of only particulars contradicts himself with each experiment he makes." This is a dead give-away, which implicitly supports my analysis. The error is this: "positivistic" scientists—and among scientists only some, on their own time, are positivists—do not assert "the existence of only particulars." On the contrary, positivists regard *both* such an assertion *and* its denial as the purest metaphysical moonshine. From Auguste Comte on, positivists have rejected the whole nominalist-realist controversy as, at best, pre-scientific. But I am less interested in scoring points against Professor Hall than in taking the measure of his remarks. How, one wants to know, can the making of an experiment "contradict" an assertion? An assertion, as Professor Hall knows, can be formally contradicted only by another assertion, and the making of experiments is not as such an assertion. If there is a "contradiction" it is only in that wider, pragmatic sense of the term in which one can sometimes speak of contradictory or conflicting attitudes or actions. In this sense, as I pointed out, there is indeed a practical, if not a formal, inconsistency in the conduct of the nominalist who commits himself exclusively to the reality of particulars, yet continues to talk and act as though general runs really counted. Oddly, Professor Hall's telling, if elliptical and inelegant, statement itself presupposes that, since assertions about the exclusive reality of particulars can be "contradicted" by experiments and hence by actions, the fundamental force of such assertions is, as I contended (for Peirce), fundamentally practical and pragmatic. Hall, it seems, is a pragmatic metaphysician in spite of himself.

Opus Dei

To the Editor of Commentary:

I was surprised to read . . . the misleading statements about Opus Dei made by a man of such obvious competence as Mr. Ray Alan. ["Franco's Spain and the New Europe," September 1962].

It is well known that Opus Dei does not

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identify itself with the political, economic, professional, or scientific views of its members, for the simple reason that Opus Dei has no position of its own on such questions and therefore makes absolutely no imposition on the freedom of its members.

It is also well known that there are members of Opus Dei in Franco's government, as there are in practically every field. But for every member who may have a particular policy there are many who have different and even opposing views. All of this has nothing to do with Opus Dei, whose sole purpose is spiritual and apostolic. It is not involved in the play of forces or balance of power in Spain or in any other of the fifty-odd countries where it exists throughout the world. . . .

WILLIAM A. MIELE

Tenafly, New Jersey

MR. ALAN *writes:*

As Mr. Miele omits to specify which of my statements about Opus Dei he considers misleading I cannot reply in any detail. When he declares that Opus Dei "is not involved in the play of forces or balance of power in Spain," he shows merely that he knows very little about Spain. There is definitely what all competent observers of the Spanish scene describe as an "Opus Dei wing" of the Franco administration. Its members, to their credit, are among the most competent and, in economic matters, most liberal of General Franco's ministers and advisers. It is primarily their organization's passion for secrecy and backstairs influence-peddling that has led so many articulate Spaniards to take a sinister view of their—and its—role.

If it were true that Opus Dei members are equally active in "practically every other field," one would expect to find a similar number of influential Opus Dei figures in the leading liberal and socialist opposition movements. I therefore invite Mr. Miele to name five or six Opus Dei members, of the standing of Franco's principal Opus Dei ministers and advisers, who are active in opposition politics. (The names of most bona fide opposition leaders, inside and outside Spain, are known to foreign correspondents and diplomats, as well as to Franco's three political police services, so Mr. Miele is in no danger of revealing embarrassing secrets.) I need hardly add my belief that Mr. Miele will be unable to accept this invitation since Opus Dei is anathema to every Spanish opposition movement—liberal, Marxist, or Catholic—that I know. It is, in fact, so closely associated with the regime in Spanish minds, however erroneously, that its chances of surviving in a democratic Spain in its present form are slight.

Covenant Theology

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Though Rabbi Borowitz may deplore it ["The Jewish Need for Theology," August 1962], it is only natural that the "folk-oriented" Jew, not committed to a personal God, should be flocking to the synagogue and, by dint of his activism and intense concern, is even taking it over. It is unlikely that . . . the synagogue can be taken away from him and "saved for the religious Jew" in a society where the only two broad areas of dissent usually allowed are political . . . and religious. . . . Moreover, that type of Jew embodies one trend of our many-faceted tradition and does not lack in legitimacy.

The ancient rabbinic definition . . . affirms the mystical unity of God, People, and its Way as the essence of Judaism. . . . Current individualist-existentialist terminology impedes the intelligent discussion of Judaism, whose center is a collective Covenant rather than an individual revelatory experience.

Judaism is not a religion to be experienced in isolation. . . . Belief occupies no place in Judaism; it is not a virtue to be rewarded with easier access to salvation . . . nor is it essential to the deity whose uniqueness and unity are pre-existent. . . . A new Jewish theology must be . . . the living core around which an attitude toward daily life can grow. *Halachah has been Jewish theology* for so long because it embodies this essential Jewish attitude.

God's demands do not include worship, adulation, or adoration. They are concerned with man's role in this world. . . . No injustice to anyone can fail to concern a Jew nor may he be indifferent when someone else suffers property damage. . . .

The mechanism for the development of a modern theology has been bequeathed to us by the founders of rabbinic Judaism. It is known as Midrash and is the basis on which Judaism has survived for two millennia. It consists of contemplating the lessons of the Word and applying them to one's time. Only if we view the world about us as the Prophets would have, may we hope to walk united, the "folk-oriented" Jew and God-seeking Jew, in the light of the Lord. . . .

W. ZEV BAIRLEY

Mexico City, Mexico

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To the Editor of Commentary:

In a restricted sense, the point of view expressed by Rabbi Borowitz is certainly valid, but the antidote he suggests is dangerously virulent. An intense articulation of theology would probably have an invigorating effect on Judaism . . . but I question the notion that any theology is a *sine qua non* of Judaism, and, most especially, the idea that there is a correlation between an individual's commitment to theology and the possibility of his being a "true," "good" Jew.

The secular Jew with a fervent intellectual and *emotional* commitment is no less a bona fide member of *Klal Yisroel* than his more conventionally devout contemporaries. To circumscribe his role . . . is to impose an irrelevant precondition. Should the secularist choose to play a full part in the activities of a congregation, his contribution can bear no predetermined proportion to this theological conformity.

While careful to eschew "dogmatic" theology, Rabbi Borowitz's plea for a "systematic" theology becomes doctrinaire. Instead of the healthy dialectic that is envisaged, this type of theological nose-counting would in all likelihood produce a sharp "factionalization" within Jerusalem.

Daniel M. Newman

Amity Harbor, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

What intrigued me most in Rabbi Borowitz's article were his theses that "the time has come when the synagogue must be saved for the religious Jew" by giving Judaism a modern theology; and that a truly secular Jew "must be considered truncated and unfulfilled so long as his Jewish loyalty is limited to the people but not to the God it serves."

. . . I agree with Rabbi Borowitz on both scores, so far as American Jewry is concerned; but I strongly suspect that he is completely off base when it comes to attempting to apply his second thesis to Jews in Israel.

Here in America, the Jews can only be completely acceptable as a religious group. A completely secular American Judaism . . . is clearly impracticable. . . . Israelis, however, do not have to place emphasis on their religion in order to be at ease as Jews. I have been told again and again that 90 per cent of the Israelis are non-religious if not agnostic. . . . In the long run, it seems to me that, not from Zion, but from New York City, will "Torah" emanate!

Harry Lebau

Elizabeth, New Jersey

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Rabbi Borowitz proposes to combat secularism with theology. And the theology must be systematic and existentialist at the same time. Assuming this is not self-contradictory, what reasonable ground is there for anticipating any impact of consequence on any part of the public? One generalization that can safely be made about the post-Emancipation Jew "of intellectual self-respect" is, that he cannot be given any doctrine; he must find out for himself. But if the audience is uninformed as well as unreceptive, the theologians will be heard only by themselves. An ineluctable prerequisite to Jewish theology is *talmud torah*. The former cannot stimulate the latter.

. . . Jewish study does not have to be reinstated as a *mitzvah* before it can be reemployed as a life preserver. . . . Is it quixotic to persevere in the belief that Franz Rosenzweig's success in establishing the *Lehrhaus* can in some way be duplicated and reduplicated in many American communities? Is it unrealistic to hope that in this limited area the secular organizations will eventually surrender their autonomy to a central agency like the United Jewish Appeal, which . . . can invest Jewish learning with status second only to that of giving?

Nathan Learner

Quincy, Massachusetts

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . I agree with Rabbi Borowitz when he asks for a philosophical approach and urges the acceptance of its consequences—the eventual elimination of blocks of members from our congregations and the isolation of many who call themselves Jews today from formal Jewish life. But where are we to turn for these philosophical theological definitions? To say that Maimonides turned to Aristotle and therefore we should turn, for instance, to Kant . . . begs the question, for Maimonides did not begin by turning to Aristotle; he began with a statement of Halachah and through an understanding of its dynamic attempted to come to terms with Aristotle. I feel if a statement of Jewish theology is ever to be evolved it too must begin with the given. . . .

(Rabbi) Harry Z. Sky

Temple Beth El
Portland, Maine

Rabbi Borowitz *writes:*

One thing clearly emerges from the response to my article on the need for Jewish theology. We need it as much for the prac-

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tical purpose of communication as for the religious purpose of preserving our identity. Not all the misunderstanding is theological. Some of it is a matter of finding what one wishes or expects to find rather than what is on the printed page. I did not call for an existentialist Jewish theology to meet our present needs. I asked rather for an awakening of theological concern, interest, debate, representing as many views as are worthy to stand in the arena of informed, serious discussion. To be sure, I do not see how any Jewish theology can hope to understand, much less speak to, our time without benefiting from the contributions made by religious existentialism over the past nearly half-century. Still I do not identify the two and thus limit Jewish theology to one mode of discourse. What all Jewish theology has in common is its concern for God's role in Israel's (and mankind's) destiny, and its disciplined effort to explain Jewish faith in this regard. What our subliminal secularization requires is conscious attention to who God is and what God wants, perhaps even "needs," of us as Jews. Regardless of the framework in which these matters are discussed and elucidated they will serve to counterbalance if not overcome the growing displacement of piety as the foundation of the synagogue, and thus the eventual debasement of American Israel.

Mr. Bairley cites a collective Covenant to justify an aversion to individual faith and a satisfaction with group identity and action. He goes so far as to say "God's demands . . . do not include worship . . ." and to deny that we need a contemporary style of Jewish thought because an adequate one "has been bequeathed to us by the founders of rabbinic Judaism . . . Midrash." Mr. Bairley should make up his mind whether he really wishes to follow the rabbis. Not only did they fill the Midrash with praise of worship, they made it a critical part of the required pattern of Jewish living. The inconsistency points up the need for method and rigor in thinking about Jewish religion, in other words, the elaboration of the discipline known as theology. Moreover, even the content of Mr. Bairley's position calls for theological exposition. Can there be a Covenant without God? Who is the God who enters into a Covenant with man? What is His role alongside man's in building His Kingdom (surely not His "city" in Jewish thought)? What are man's duties to Him and how do these affect and relate to his duties to other men? In short, if there is a Covenant, there is a God and the need for thinking men of faith to expound their belief, *ergo* theology.

Mr. Newman is right in wondering whether Jewish living is a direct function of Jewish theology. That life may not reflect thought is one of the bitterest lessons of the 20th century. I would rather say that Jewish living is a function of Jewish faith. I am interested, not in every Jew having a theology or passing a theological check-list, but in refreshing and reviving his Jewish faith. That I believe is the only meaningful and lasting basis for Jewish living. But I see theology as the most significant means of clarifying and thus promoting Jewish faith—at least to those who wish to think about their beliefs.

Mr. Lebau's frame of reference is social. The problem is how Jews can "be completely acceptable" in their community. . . . But if there is a God for Jews in America there is certainly one for those of the State of Israel. What the Jewish tradition says and what modern Jews must again understand is that our problem is how to make ourselves "acceptable" to Him and to find our "ease" in Him. Hopefully, by attending to that reality of their existence which transcends land and language . . . the Jews of the Diaspora may make a unique contribution to their agnostic brothers of the State of Israel.

Mr. Learner surely did not think I wanted all adult education in Bible, history, and Hebrew to cease and immediately turn to Rosenzweig's Star of Redemption. Rather I want Jewish theology to find its place in *talmud torah*. I don't see how one can study the Jewish tradition and leave out the religious questions which lie at its roots. . . . Jewish education is ultimately not an end in itself. . . . Study originates in a divine imperative and confronts one continually with a God who commands.

Rabbi Sky, at least, sees the problem in practical terms. Where shall we find an appropriate methodology for Jewish theology particularly since we do not have the comfort of a generally accepted view of truth? The 13th century could utilize Aristotle and the 19th century, German idealism, almost as if they were to be taken for granted. How shall we proceed in the midst of our philosophical and social upheaval? That question I see, not as the end of my suggestion, but rather the beginning of its implementation.

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"A SETTLED HABIT OF BEHAVIOR"*

George Lichtheim

NEO-CONSERVATISM is not as influential in the present decade as it was in the 1950's, when the postwar reaction against all forms of radicalism was in full swing. A defensive tone has once more crept into it, replacing the former self-confident assertiveness. Its spokesmen still maintain an attitude of considerable *hauteur* toward their opponents, but they seem less sure that the argument has been finally decided in their favor by the wave of disillusionment which originally sparked it off. These swings of the intellectual pendulum clearly owe something to external pressures, but they also reflect the intrinsic character of a debate which by its nature cannot come to a permanent stop. Conservatives and radicals will go on arguing as long as there is something to argue about. Currently it may also be that we are witnessing the emergence of a middle group which borrows from the two opposing sides with the aim of promoting a synthesis. In our post-revolutionary climate this would correspond to the spread of liberalism in the 1830's, after Jacobins and anti-Jacobins had done their worst and exhausted their vocabulary. Perhaps a modern, streamlined version of non-totalitarian socialism is due to fill the gap.

Any such perspective, however unwelcome to "true believers" in the gospel according to Lenin, is equally unpalatable to the school of thought represented by Professor Michael Oakeshott, Harold Laski's successor to the chair of political science at the London School of Economics. By now the surprise occasioned by this appointment and by the new incumbent's Inaugural Lecture in 1951 —reproduced in this volume of collected essays—has had time to wear off. The news has even got around that in choosing a Conservative to succeed Laski, the Governors of the LSE simply reverted to tradition. Laski's tenure was a fluke, and his evanescent influence a by-product of the stormy 30's: the Popular Front era. By 1945, when the Labor government came in, he had already passed his peak. When Oakeshott succeeded him in 1951—at the height of Labor's unpopularity with an electorate which had come to associate socialism with rationing, petty bureaucratic meddling, shabby clothes, "mousetrap" cheese, and a pervasive atmosphere of seediness and discomfort—it was time for the pendulum to swing back.

It did so in the now famous Inaugural Lecture on "Political Education," which proclaimed as the foremost principle of statesmanship the duty not to rock the boat. The case had been put before—notably by Burke, the *fons et origo* of British conservatism—but rarely with such an air of intellectual superiority. Professor Oakeshott's elegant style (distinctly Whiggish, but then Burke was himself a renegade Whig: the real home-grown Tories, if the truth be told, are not very good at thinking or writing) fitted the mood of the moment. The public, including a sizable slab of the intelligentsia, was tired of wartime austerity, fed up with democracy, disappointed with socialism, and nostalgic for the charms of a stabler and more cultivated age. It voted Winston Churchill back into office, and cheered Michael Oakeshott when he proclaimed the great Whig-Tory doctrine that the purpose of sound politics is to keep things as they

* A review of *Rationalism in Politics*, by Michael Oakeshott (Basic Books, 333 pp., $6.50).

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are, with the minimum of concessions to such change as can be shown to be absolutely necessary. The counter-revolution—a very British, very genteel, very well-mannered counter-revolution—had triumphed.

IT DIDN'T last, of course: nothing ever does. While it lasted, which was for about ten years, things were a bit dull, but not markedly uncomfortable even for radicals. There was no purge: Britain produced no McCarthy; instead it got Macmillan, the very epitome of conservative respectability and aristocratic elegance (though his grandfather was a Scottish crofter). The country turned even more insular as its global power dwindled; its intellectuals tended to become parochial (while urging their continental neighbors to be "outward-looking"); and its academics retreated further into their cloisters. They now had solid philosophic reasons for concerning themselves with trifles. These were the years when the late Sir Lewis Namier's pedantic reconsideration of British politics in 1760 was solemnly hailed as a major intellectual revolution. Historians went back to the 18th century, and then further back, to the Tudors (they still do—it is their favorite epoch). The emphasis once more was on research. General ideas were at a discount: they had been shown up as untrustworthy, only fit for foreigners. This mood still persists, as any reader of the volume here under review can see for himself, but it is less complacent now than it was a decade ago. For one thing, the foreigners—Americans, Russians, Europeans—went on making history, while the BBC duly reported the doings of the Royal Family and the latest score in the England-Australia cricket match; for another thing, Conservative muddling-through turned out to be uneconomic in the plain sense of the word: it didn't pay. After a while even quite ordinary people began to notice this and to fret about it. By now the *laisser-faire* doctrine expounded by Professor Oakeshott as the "political economy of freedom" is under fire. There are heretical mutterings in the least expected quarters, and the *Times* itself has been heard to question whether doing nothing is necessarily the best policy under all imaginable circumstances. In short, the swing back has begun.

It will not be halted by these essays, though its intellectual expression will be affected by the need to take account of them. No reaction is ever completely lost, any more than a revolution can be erased. The two movements complement each other: with luck, the next turn of the screw is an upward one which conserves the lessons of the past. Burke taught the radicals of his day something they had overlooked in their enthusiasm over what was happening in Paris. Professor Oakeshott is no Burke, but his elegantly phrased diatribes against radicalism and rationalism have their value in the context of a debate which must go on as long as people ask themselves serious questions about society. There are great names on both sides: Hegel, Acton, Tocqueville, Burckhardt, all had their share in deflating the wilder hopes and illusions born in 1789. In continuing their work, contemporary Whigs and Tories place their opponents under an obligation to examine their own beliefs, and where necessary re-state them. In short, they fulfill the essential function of seeing to it that the unending dialectic of these conceptual tournaments stays as close as possible to the political facts.

This said, the conservative argument in itself need not be treated with excessive gravity. It never alters, though from time to time its formulation does. The essential theme is always the same: history is continuous, and even revolutions take place within a traditional continuum (Professor Oakeshott affirms this explicitly of the Russian Revolution); statesmanship is the art of the possible; its true function is to lessen discord and enable men to live together without violence; utopian aims defeat themselves in practice; abstract liberty, equality, and fraternity are illusions—noble perhaps, but empty; private property, on the other hand, is no illusion but the basis of society and the precondition of the good life; all genuine change is slow and imperceptible; when it becomes rapid and turbulent, this is to be regarded as a pathological phenomenon and a sign that doctrinaire rationalists have temporarily seized power, for the greater glory of their own silly selves and to the detriment of their unfortunate fellow-citizens; general principles take the place of unspoken beliefs and habits when the cake of custom has been broken—the greatest disaster that can befall any society; all revo-

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lutions are hostile to individual liberty, whatever the aims professed by their leaders; freedom is preserved by not allowing anyone to do too much or to accumulate too much power; it is safest in a society of small property owners; doctrinaire reformers are to be distrusted; sound politics are about ordinary matters; that government is best which governs least.

It will be evident that this is not the authentic Tory doctrine, for it is silent on social hierarchy, traditional morality, and the divine right of kings. Professor Oakeshott indeed, like a true Whig, is indifferent to monarchy (save insofar as it keeps things stable) and vaguely critical of Christian morality. His observations on this latter subject (in the essay entitled "The Tower of Babel") make awkward reading for idealist philosophers and theologians in search of allies, for by his own rigorous standards even religious idealism, however attenuated in practice, suffers from the fault of being concerned with abstract principles. It has for many centuries been "dominated by the pursuit of moral ideals," instead of contenting itself with being simply a way of life. "In so far as this is an unhappy form of morality, prone to obsession and at war with itself, it is a misfortune to be deplored; in so far as it cannot now readily be avoided, it is a misfortune to be made the best of." "The predicament of Western morals, as I read it, is first that our moral life has come to be dominated by the pursuit of ideals, a dominance ruinous to a settled habit of behavior; and secondly, that we have come to think of this dominance as a benefit for which we should be grateful or an achievement of which we should be proud." Whereas if we had more sense we would recognize that *all* ideals are ruinous.

This is the doctrine of Hume, another conservative skeptic with a great respect for "a settled habit of behavior." It is Whiggish (Hume's affected Toryism has never deceived anyone) and 18th century: English Whiggery descends from Hume and Gibbon even more than from Burke. The true focus of its sentiment is individualism, i.e., a particular tradition, not tradition as such. There are indeed many Burkean passages to be found in Oakeshott, e.g.: "With eyes focused upon distant horizons and minds clouded with foreign clap-trap, the impatient and sophisticated generation now in the saddle has dissolved its partnership with its past and is careful of everything except its liberty." But then this particular essay ("The Political Economy of Freedom") deals with the socialist critique of private property, and even the most languid Whig becomes a bit impassioned when this subject is raised. In any event, "liberty" embodies enough of tradition to satisfy most Tories. "To be brief, collectivism and freedom are real alternatives—if we choose one we cannot have the other. And collectivism can be imposed upon a society educated in a love of freedom with an appearance of not destroying *continuity* [author's italics] only if men forget their love of liberty. This . . . is how the matter appeared to . . . Tocqueville, Burckhardt and Acton, when the character of modern collectivism was in process of being revealed."

It is important that this issue should be *felt,* not argued. In an earlier essay Professor Oakeshott showed himself suspicious of F. A. Hayek, a liberal in the Whig tradition, because his cast of mind is rationalist. "A plan to resist all planning may be better than its opposite, but it belongs to the same style of politics." What is required is not a particular doctrine, but an absence of doctrine, and an attachment to the status quo. Now this mode of reasoning is available to conservative liberals only at the cost of some unpopularity. It is not, for example, compatible with modern welfare-state liberalism which by its nature tends dangerously toward "collectivism"—if only to keep a step ahead of the socialist competition. In practice this reduces the political appeal of the doctrine, a circumstance which to a philosopher perhaps matters less than it does to ordinary political thinkers, except that Oakeshott's main criterion has to do with consensus and custom in his native Britain: a country spared the worst ravages of continental thinking. It must be a disappointment to him that faith in traditional ways of life has not quite managed to keep these troublesome innovations out.

From the viewpoint of his transatlantic admirers there is the further difficulty that while his economics are acceptable, his politics are not: clearly it is not possible for Americans to join him in treating the Dec-

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laration of Independence (together with its French counterpart) as a prime source of the "rationalist" fallacy from which all our present evils have sprung. Yet from the introductory essay in this collection the reader will learn that "the early history of the United States of America is an instructive chapter in the history of the politics of Rationalism." He will also learn that rationalism, after giving birth to the American and French Revolutions, culminated in Marx and Engels. This is arguable, though it overlooks the anti-rationalist influence of Hegel, who had absorbed Burke's critique, and was in turn absorbed by Marx. But true or not, it is not a doctrine that can be of the slightest use to *Time* magazine or Senator Goldwater. It can be employed only by people who are willing to go the whole hog in treating the Declaration of Independence as "a characteristic product of the *saeculum rationalisticum*. It represents the politics of the felt need interpreted with the aid of an ideology. And it is not surprising that it should have become one of the sacred documents of the politics of Rationalism, and, together with the similar documents of the French Revolution, the inspiration and pattern of many later adventures in the rationalist reconstruction of society." No doubt this is what some American conservatives suspect in the privacy of their thoughts, but it is not something to be affirmed in public. Toryism, even of the modified Burkean kind, simply will not take root anywhere save in English soil.

IT MAY be said that this is irrelevant: what counts is whether a statement is true, not whether it is popular. But on Burkean principles what is "true" of England need not be true of all other countries, notably if one applies Oakeshott's criterion for judging the usefulness of a mode of thought, which is broadly whether or not it conforms to "a traditional manner of behavior." For may not rationalism itself be in tune with tradition and the cake of custom? In fact we are told: "Long before the Revolution . . . the disposition of mind of the American colonists, the prevailing intellectual character and habit of politics, were rationalistic." This was unfortunate, for "Rationalist politics . . . are the politics of the felt need, the felt need not qualified by a genuine concrete knowledge of the permanent interests and direction of movement of a society, but inspired by 'reason' and satisfied according to the technique of an ideology: they are the politics of the book." Still, if the American colonists were addicted to this deplorable mode of reasoning, it is difficult to see how on traditionalist grounds they can be blamed for acting upon what had become *their* tradition.

Then again consider the filiation of ideas from the English Revolution (good) to the American Revolution (bad). "For the inspiration of Jefferson and the other founders of American independence was the ideology which Locke had distilled from the English political tradition. They were disposed to believe, and they believed more fully than was possible for an inhabitant of the Old World, that the proper organization of a society and the conduct of its affairs were based upon abstract principles, and not upon a tradition which, as Hamilton said, had 'to be rummaged for among old parchments and musty records.' These principles were not the product of civilization; they were natural, 'written in the whole volume of human nature.'" So much for Locke's American pupils. True, a few years later Burke, in his alarm over what was happening in France, also appealed to Natural Law, but then *his* deductions were conservative and therefore acceptable, whereas the conclusions drawn by the American and French radicals were subversive of the existing order, and thus reprehensible. This doctrine was a great comfort to supporters of the *ancien régime* (and subsequently to slave-owners threatened by the emancipation of their human cattle), but its theoretical standing has always looked questionable to people not impressed by conservative rhetoric. Incidentally one learns from Professor Oakeshott's analysis of property that the "right to enjoy the ownership of his personal capacities *and of anything else obtained by the methods of acquisition recognized in the society*" [my italics] is self-limiting: "for example, it proscribes slavery, not arbitrarily, but because the right to own another man could never be a right enjoyed equally by every member of a society." This suggests that what is wrong with slavery is that it cannot be made universal. In fact, of course, it was pretty nearly universal in antiquity,

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given the tacit understanding (part of the "traditional manner of behavior") that only free citizens counted as members of society. This may help to explain why conservative writers are so fond of Plato, or if they are slightly Whiggish, of Aristotle. It may also explain why their own thinking has not advanced significantly beyond the categories worked out by their classical ancestors.

MODERN JEWISH DILEMMAS

ABRAHAM GEIGER AND LIBERAL JUDAISM. Compiled with a biographical introduction by MAX WIENER. *Jewish Publication Society. 305 pp. $4.50.*

Reviewed by ARTHUR HERTZBERG

JEWISH MODERNITY as a continuous tradition is more than two hundred years old. A century before its establishment, to be sure, Spinoza had embodied the most radical of modern Jewish choices—that of the Jew who has ceased being Jewish without feeling the need to convert to Christianity—but Spinoza's example had no immediate followers. The outlook and mode of behavior that we identify as modern began to exist as a significant force in Jewish history with Moses Mendelssohn and his circle—that is to say, in Germany in the 18th century. Mendelssohn himself was an Orthodox Jew who made it his life's work to defend his people and his faith with the weapons of an elevated German style and a good control of contemporary philosophy. His program called for Westernizing the manners, language, and education of European Jewry, thus fitting Jews for the experience of that political and social emancipation toward which he also labored. In his assertion that Judaism had no dogmas, Mendelssohn sought to create room for Western-style philosophical speculation; and at the same time, by asserting that the commandments of the Jewish tradition were divinely revealed, he hoped to secure the continuing Orthodoxy of those who, like himself, had entered the wider intellectual world.

Mendelssohn's position was caught in an inherent self-contradiction. Free philosophical thought, especially in an age of Deism and agnosticism, could not fail to extend beyond the realm of the speculative into that of the practical. It is one thing to believe that God is a heavenly watchmaker who has created a perfect machine which He is now admiring; to couple this with saying to Him three times a day, "Heal us, O Lord," or with chanting *"El Mole Rach'mim"* to Him for the repose of the dead is quite another. Furthermore, asserting that Judaism is a system of "revealed legislation" itself involves a good many dogmas of the very kind that Mendelssohn sought to deny. It implies a God who speaks to men and who has revealed Himself decisively: what more primary dogma is there than this? But Mendelssohn's need was not one of intellectual consistency. He was able to solve the question of how to be at the same time a Jew and a modern man by affirming within himself both these beings in their entirety. Thus he prefigures that kind of modern Orthodoxy which can both assert the literal truth of the book of Genesis and produce professors of geology.

There was deep insight in the increasing distrust found among the rabbinic leaders of the ghetto in Mendelssohn's day and after. They were correct in regarding the synthesis that he embodied as an unstable one. Those whom he and followers, the later "Enlighteners," led out of their closed talmudic world very quickly ceased paying this world even formal obeisance. Western culture, or any culture for that matter, involves far more than language, manners, and book learning; it implies nothing less than an attitude to life, and those who believed that the Jewish way is God's will were absolutely right, from their point of view, to try to dynamite all the bridges to the outside world. This belief continues to operate today in the Hasidic communities in Williamsburg and Mea Shearim in Jerusalem and in a few *yeshivot*, but it did not succeed in keeping the majority of the Jews out of the modern world. Self-ghettoization has not been a popular alternative to the Jewish predicament in the Western world; for that matter, neither has intellectual schizophrenia of the Mendelssohn kind.

Some Jews reacted to modernity by converting to Christianity, paying the price of a "ticket of entry" into the fullness of Western society; others have adopted the position—best described by Sartre—of being

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Jews by situation. For the most part, however, Jews have been occupied with all the possible permutations of the answer to one ultimate question: how can the Jew, as Jew, cease being two and become one? On what basis can he transcend the tension of being Jew and German, Jew and American, or Jew and modern man, and become, within himself and in the eyes of others, "just like everybody else"?

Logically, there are two ways to approach the problem: one can either change the world or change oneself. If the world, through persecution, and the Jew, through self-ghettoization, have jointly created an identity that is *sui generis,* one can imagine a new order that uproots these ancient errors and brings men, as men, into new relationships. Certainly the passion of Jews for all ideologies of the 18th and 19th centuries, from the French Revolution to Freud, has been nurtured by this desire to create a world in which there is now not "neither Jew nor Greek"—in St. Paul's phrase—but neither Jew nor Christian. On the other hand, one can relate to the world as it is, or as it is becoming, and even love it with great passion. The problem is, then, essentially a conservative one: how to become part of the "establishment," whatever that may be in one's own time and place. For those who are rooted in the Jewish past the way has become one of bringing Judaism with them into modern life by changing it into a new key. Thus the current wishful self-image of most American Jews is exemplified in Will Herberg's famous title, *Catholic—Protestant —Jew.* Everyone knows that the Jews in America are not just like the Protestants and Catholics, but this is what they dearly want to be—religious difference now being regarded as the only acceptable one among Americans. Hence so much of Jewish life that a generation ago was felt as an ethnic experience has come more and more to take on an "ecclesiastical face."

THIS development is, of course, nothing new. In fact, the great difficulty with modern Jewish thought is that there have been no new notes for at least a century. To make Judaism "Western" one could affirm it either as a religion, like other Western faiths, or as a nation, like other Western nations. Each of these possibilities was defined by a German Jew in the 19th century. In 1862, Moses Hess expressed the nationalist view in *Rome and Jerusalem,* the first classic of modern Zionism. By then Abraham Geiger had been the leader of the movement for religious reform for several decades. Geiger wished to be a German first and then a Jew. German national identity was not, he argued, blood or race but a matter of culture and political allegiance. Co-nationalists differed in their faith, and his was Judaism.

Geiger was completely logical in his insistence that national elements had to be entirely removed from Judaism. For a Jew to be comfortable as the kind of German patriot that Geiger wished to be, it was necessary for Judaism to become a universal religion, the bearer of an elevated and divinely inspired morality. The specific contents of his theology can be reduced to three motifs: a deep respect for and involvement in the Jewish past; a continuing criticism of, and a sense of difference from, Christianity; and the affirmation of a liberal humanitarianism. When his son announced that he was abandoning Jewish studies for other fields, Geiger could only write an answer amounting to the hope that the young man would be a true lover of mankind. It is surely no coincidence that not only the most radical of American Jewish Reformers, Emil G. Hirsch, but also a leading religious liberal who left Judaism, Felix Adler, were Geiger's disciples.

The vision of Judaism as a universal religion demands the difficult task of defining in believable fashion a set of Jewish ethical norms which differ so materially from either Christianity or liberalism that it is worth the difference to remain a Jew. This definition Geiger never produced. In any case, the emphasis on ethical content was primarily intended to get around the problem of ritual obedience, so that the modern Jew might be free on religious grounds to do what he was doing anyway for other reasons—i.e., breaking with the inherited commandments. Geiger invoked the principle of history to validate such change. His great contributions to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* were based on the premise that Judaism had always been in its nature an evolving tradition and that therefore change

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was not only permissible but was an obligation for his own time.

Those who broke with Geiger, finding him too radical, like Zechariah Fraenkel and the other "Conservatives," did not really differ with him on this principle. They too believed that Judaism had evolved historically and that change was therefore the order of the present. They differed from him rather in being more involved in Hebrew and much more traditional by temperament; they had a far greater sense than he that Judaism was rooted in an actual Jewish community and not in some abstract confession.

But the premises of all the varieties of liberal Judaism, from the most conservative to the most radical, ultimately descend from the notion of history. Rereading Geiger, especially under the guidance of so great a scholar and historian as the late Max Wiener, raises many questions about this principle. Solomon Schechter, for instance, had tried to evade perhaps the most pointed of these questions, namely, who is to decide on the necessity of change, by positing the existence of Catholic Israel, the community of all Jews who make their choices through the life they lead. Now, such an idea seems very plausible when applied to a community that is overwhelmingly and commitedly Jewish in the serious sense; in a less Jewish community like our own, however, we have seen that the majority may choose many things which even the liberals must deny on the basis of some ultimate Jewish standard. In our time, therefore, we are unavoidably confronted with the questions: what are the basic standards that one cannot change? by whose authority do we change the changeable?

The whole of modern Jewish thought, insofar as it is affirmatively Jewish, is an attempt to find the grounds for affirming Judaism without a belief in Halachah, in the divinity of Jewish Law. Geiger's thought is the greatest example of this attempt at its most religiously radical. Intellectually and historically the attempt has failed—though we keep on repeating the experiment. Perhaps our greatest debt to this excellent book is that it has made available in English one of the most profound expressions of Jewish modernity. Perhaps if some of our contemporary theologians and thinkers were to reread Geiger, we might be spared any further reinvention of his positions—positions taken in a time when they had true contemporary relevance. Perhaps the energies that have gone into reinventing him and Fraenkel will now be released for the necessary task of going beyond them toward a Jewish theology for our own day.

INNOCENCE ABROAD

WORLD WITHOUT WANT. By PAUL G. HOFFMAN. *Harper & Row. 144 pp. $3.50.*
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN PERSPECTIVE. By JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH. *Harvard University Press. 76 pp. $2.50.*

Reviewed by ROBERT L. HEILBRONER

> As we rode into Magdala not a soul was visible. But the ring of the horses' hoofs roused the stupid population, and they all came trooping out—old men and old women, boys and girls, the blind, the crazy, and the crippled, all in a ragged, soiled, and scanty raiment, and all abject beggars by nature, instinct, and education. How the vermin-tortured vagabonds did swarm! How they showed their scars and sores, and piteously pointed to their maimed and crooked limbs, and begged with their pleading eyes for charity! . . .

IT IS the voice of Mark Twain which mocks the beggars of the Near East. He has previously had his fun with the cripples of Constantinople: the three-legged woman, the faceless dwarf, etc. But perhaps we should not be too shocked. After all, Mark Twain was writing almost a hundred years ago, when to many American eyes Asiatic poverty appeared as a kind of gigantic circus side show, an amusing grotesquerie. We no longer read *Innocents Abroad* to learn about the state of the world in 1869; we read it to learn about the state of the American mind.

It seems a very far cry from the innocent eye of the 19th-century tourist to the knowing glance of the 20th-century development expert. "Walk down the main street of Kasai village in the Congo," writes Paul Hoffman. "Look at the gaunt frames of the men and women—the swollen bellies of the children. This is hunger—with starvation just a yard away. Look at their eyes. As they meet yours,

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a glimmer of hope springs up. They cannot believe that you can see their plight and do nothing about it."

What has changed since Mark Twain's day are not so much the real conditions: these are all too depressingly the same. What is different are the subjective conditions, and specifically the American frame of mind. Where a Mark Twain chuckles, a Hoffman or a Galbraith draws in breath. Where Mark Twain looks for the outstanding "sights," they look for the hidden structures. Where he wants only to divert his readers, they want to instruct, alert, even alarm them. And not least, whereas Mark Twain never gave a thought as to what the "beggars by instinct, nature, and education" might think of his words, both Hoffman and Galbraith write with one eye cocked in the direction of the underdeveloped countries themselves.

WHAT they see and what they say is not fundamentally different: the American view of development is not signally affected whether one is an ex-Harvard professor serving as ambassador to India or an ex-businessman serving as Director of the United Nations Special Fund. Common themes, common stresses run through both books. The backward nations are in the throes of a desperate struggle to escape from the hopeless past. The richer nations must help. But help is not merely a matter of transferring money, as we once thought. Before the massive transfer of capital must come a period of intensive preparation. Education is no less a part of development than steel, and must precede or at least pace industrialization. Good government must be cultivated as assiduously as good land. Rigid preconceptions about the programming of development are apt to miscarry: countries differ in their needs, and at different stages in its development the *same* country differs in its needs. Development is impossible without planning, but planning is unlikely to make much headway without a considerable degree of autonomy for the productive units. Excellent suggestions, cogent warnings abound. The tone is mild but firm. The outlook is cautious but hopeful.

And yet, and yet—what is the note that reminds us of the past? It is not, of course, the brashness, heartlessness, the uninterest of Mark Twain. Is it not, rather, an innocence which pervades the books of the 20th century no less than those of a century ago—an innocence identifiable not so much by what is seen in each era as by what is not? Mark Twain, writing in the flush of the American spirit of the mid-1800's, cannot see the mountainous fact of underdevelopment looming over his landscape of beggars. Hoffman and Galbraith, writing in the flush of the American spirit of the mid-1900's, cannot see the mountainous fact of social revolution looming over their landscape of economic development.

Their innocence, in other words, is a failure to recognize that the central, inescapable, and indispensable precondition for "economic" development is political and social change on a wrenching and tearing scale. Economic development is not, alas, a mere matter of tactics to be decided among men of good will and then put into effect with all possible dispatch. It is, anterior to that, a contest among social classes. It is a process of institutional birth and institutional death. It is a time when power shifts, often violently and abruptly, a time when old regimes go under and new ones rise in their place. And these are not just the unpleasant side effects of development. They are part and parcel of the process, the very driving force of change itself.

But this is not the view of development which strikes the American eye today. So it is that Mr. Hoffman can write a primer on economic development and mention only in passing the words *land reform* and deal nowhere at all with the idea of political struggle, or that Mr. Galbraith can write a series of sophisticated essays on various aspects of the development process but leave unexamined the central question of who is to do the developing or of how is the enormous sacrifice and commitment necessary for development to be adduced and sustained. These are, of course, political questions, and as such they do not naturally fall within the view of the American expert on economic development. But that is just the point.

To be sure, there are mitigating circumstances. Ambassador Galbraith has here reproduced no more than the text of a few speeches he made in India, and he could scarcely be expected, in his official position, to dwell on such delicate and disruptive matters. So too there are reasons behind

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Mr. Hoffman's reticence. Like Galbraith, he is not only writing about development but he is striving at first hand to help it to take place, and what is more, he is doing so admirably and persistently in the face of endless discouragements. Hence we cannot expect him to go sounding off on revolutionary notes. He must confine himself to matters of description and prescription within a smaller focus, and this he does very well.

Nonetheless, even if certain distressing matters must be eschewed, what should be the general expectation in regard to economic development given us by so knowledgeable a man? "By 1970," writes Hoffman, "perhaps twenty nations will have achieved self-sustaining economies. . . . By the year 2000, we can be living in a world that has overcome poverty—a world without want."

Are these valid goals to hold out to the readers of the industrially advanced—or the industrially backward—world, even assuming as Hoffman does that the rich nations will fully support the advance of the poor? Will the United States be among those twenty nations who, in eight more years, will be launched into "self-sustained" growth? Will the American Negro have been freed from poverty by the year 2000? I would like to suggest these two goals, so infinitely much easier to engineer, so enormously much less tangled in social frictions and political bitterness, as proper bench marks by which to measure the feasibility of the global Great Ascent which Mr. Hoffman so blandly projects before us.

"We often had occasion to pity Americans whom we found traveling drearily among strangers with no friends to exchange pains and pleasures with," writes Mark Twain at the end of his happy voyage. "Whenever we were coming back from a land journey, our eyes sought one thing in the distance first—the ship—and when we saw it riding at anchor with the flag apeak, we felt as a returning wanderer feels when he sees his home. When we stepped on board, our cares vanished, our troubles were at an end . . . we always had the same familiar old stateroom to go to, and feel safe and at peace and comfortable again."

Thus the innocent tourist in 1869. Today the expert retires not to the haven of a ship but to the comfortable stateroom of his preconceptions. Looking out from his veranda, he has seen the banners of a distant parade about which he makes what he believes to be shrewd observations, but his sheltered vantage point has saved him from the sight of the great juggernaut itself, carrying along its millions, crushing other millions, as it lurches majestically and dangerously down the road of history.

PLANNING AND POWER

THE POLITICS OF URBAN RENEWAL: THE CHICAGO FINDINGS. By PETER H. ROSSI and ROBERT A. DENTLER. *Free Press. 308 pp. $6.00.*

Reviewed by HERBERT J. GANS

A MAJOR PROBLEM facing any central agency in charge of a plan for urban renewal is to make certain that the plan will, finally, answer not only to the broad community interest but also to the needs and desires of the individuals who live in the area. Citizen participation in the planning process traditionally has been relied on to synthesize—somehow—these two sets of interests—often conflicting. But Rossi's and Dentler's case study of the role of citizen participation in the renewal of the Hyde Park-Kenwood neighborhood in Chicago suggests that the desired synthesis is not always achieved.

About ten years ago, the University of Chicago, which is located in the Hyde Park-Kenwood district, decided that the rapid deterioration of the adjacent residential areas was partially to blame for its declining student enrollment and steady loss of faculty. Eventually, the city of Chicago commissioned the University itself to carry out a giant renewal project for the neighborhood. The University plan was to restore Hyde Park-Kenwood as a middle class neighborhood by removing the pockets of blighted and overcrowded housing. The cleared areas were to be replaced by middle- and high-cost housing, and this, in effect, meant that the University was calling for the removal, in part at least, of the working- and lower-class occupants of the area, who would not be able to afford the higher rent.

In developing its plan, the University worked with all existing citizen groups, but chiefly with the leading one, the Hyde Park-

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Kenwood Community Conference. Rossi and Dentler have studied just how effective the activities of these groups proved in shaping the final plan, and from their careful description of what happened, some conclusions may be drawn about the role of citizen participation in urban renewal—and all city planning.

What becomes immediately evident is that citizen participation is hampered by two major limitations: since it is largely a middle class activity, it tends naturally to speak for only its own section of the population; but even then, it cannot, all by itself, summon the political power to implement its wishes.

The University of Chicago, with its great intellectual reputation in the community—not to speak of its huge capital investment and influential Board of Trustees—had no difficulty in getting the municipal decisions it needed to carry out its over-all plan. But the citizens' group—the Conference—was, after all, a voluntary organization and it proved too weak to persuade either the University or City Hall to accept its recommendations for this plan. Even though it had succeeded in enlisting amazingly large numbers of active members from the neighborhood, it finally lacked the time, money, and manpower to maintain the day-to-day negotiations needed to influence the University. And politically, as far as the city administration was concerned, the Conference was only one organization in one neighborhood, covering only parts of two wards in the city's fifty. There is a lesson in the fact that citizen participation was far more effective in getting some significant, if small-scale, changes incorporated into the final renewal plan for another section of Hyde Park-Kenwood where the University of Chicago had no direct interests. No single institution or power bloc was dominant here and the Conference and other citizens' groups were able to get the cooperation of the smaller colleges, hospitals, and public agencies in the area.

To sum up, then: this study—and observations of other renewal projects—suggest that citizen groups in themselves generally lack the political power needed to implement their wishes and must thus work with other influential elements in the community. This is complicated by the fact that the ideology of citizen participation is usually apolitical or even anti-political, and in any case, not always adaptable to accepting the compromises inevitable in the large city power structure.

Partly, of course, it is the usual middle class character of citizens' groups that inherently limits political effectiveness by limiting representativeness. Pretty much like all such groups, the Conference, moving along by organizational and social skills alien to working- or lower-class people, was unable to enroll the non-middle class population in its system of block organizations. The plain fact is that, despite the rhetorical claims of citizens' groups to be even more widely representative than any political party, their actions suggest they respond above all to the special interests of their dominant middle class membership. This eventually happened in the Hyde Park-Kenwood renewal. When the Conference was asked to support the University's plan, it had in effect to sanction the latter's relocation of large numbers of poor Negroes—a matter contrary to the group's declared racial convictions.* It took several long soul-searching meetings before the Conference yielded to its class interest—the desire to see the neighborhood a middle class one—and reluctantly pledged support to the University's scheme. Unable in the earlier years to enlist the participation of poorer residents, the Conference branded them as apathetic; but when, on the plan's being made public, some of these "apathetic" elements rose up in a militant protest movement, the Conference then rejected the action, refusing to call it "citizen participation." Now, the University planners were more genuinely sensitive to the welfare of the total community, including the lower-class residents, and the Conference was more genuinely democratic and knowledgeable than is usually the case among neighborhood groups. If *they* did not succeed in reconciling conflicting interests and protecting those of their lower-income neighbors, what citizen planners could?

* Since about 60 per cent of the relocatees were Negroes, the University was accused of planning for "Negro clearance," although in actual fact it was willing to maintain the already widespread racial integration of the neighborhood, as long as the population was predominantly middle class.

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In the light of this experience—that the traditional citizen participation alone cannot assure that plans will meet the needs of all community residents—public officials must learn to accept the uninformed, often hostile, and usually non-organizational protest of poor people as a valid expression of their interests. These interests are so obvious that they should be taken into account even when there is no formal citizen participation. Local and federal officials should anticipate the needs of the low-income population in their planning: rehabilitate neighborhoods without large-scale relocation, or where the latter is necessary, have low-cost housing ready and grant substantial bonuses to the relocatees. But such radical changes in housing policies are not brought about in a vacuum; they require political pressure. Unfortunately, the low-income groups that are unheard locally are just as much unheard in Washington. This clearly means that low-income people are not likely to receive adequate recognition of their needs until they resort to more of *their* form of citizen participation—such widespread and even violent protest, that politicians will be forced to pay attention.

Rossi's and Dentler's analysis raises a question on another level: was the University's renewal plan to begin with the wisest solution for the University, the neighborhood, and the larger community? The authors do not address themselves to this question, and any definitive answer at this point would be premature. But this reviewer, himself once a resident of the area, cannot resist some comments.

Declining student enrollment and the exodus of key staff members of the University, essentially caused by University policies themselves, were aggravated, it is true, to some extent by the physical deterioration of the area and the social downgrading that accompanied it. Even so, Hyde Park-Kenwood was far from being a slum. Nor was it the declining physical and social status of the area that so affected students and faculty: it was the threat to their safety from robberies, purse snatchings, and rape that were inflicted by a small minority of the lower-class newcomers. The University planners hoped that by clearing slum buildings in the areas where crime was most prevalent, they could make the neighborhood safer.

To my mind, it is questionable whether the tearing down of buildings, however dilapidated, can solve a problem which is the by-product of the widespread deprivation that blights the lives of those who live in the slums in—and especially around—Hyde Park-Kenwood. In fact, many of the assaults I have mentioned were perpetrated by people living outside the neighborhood; 56 per cent of them according to data collected for 1958. While the subsequent clearance has brought about the removal of resident offenders, it obviously cannot guarantee a permanent solution of the crime problem. Indeed, renewal has brought greater riches to the neighborhood: there might well be an increase in the number of assaults and robberies, especially since many of the offenses are known to be committed by drug addicts. True, the crime rate has been reduced significantly in the last few years: but mainly because of a massive increase in police patrols.

All this suggests, not that slum clearance and rehabilitation were not desirable, but that the removal of lower-class residents was

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not the only means to achieve the University's ends. If the same amount of effort and money invested in renewal had been spent on attacking the crime and narcotics problem, the end result might have been more beneficial for all concerned: including the innocent low-income residents who came to Hyde Park-Kenwood in the first place to upgrade themselves.

I am aware that such a policy, easy to suggest, might have been extremely difficult —perhaps impossible—to implement. Rossi's and Dentler's book gives adequate testimony to the difficulties involved in the simpler renewal project. Also, the University administration needed—or thought it needed—dramatic and immediately visible changes in its surroundings to restore the morale of the campus. Although its way of solving the problem was far from the best solution, it was offered no incentive to do otherwise, and one can understand why it was in no mood to experiment with a utopian if eminently rational solution.*

At the time, almost nothing was known of the social aspects and consequences of this kind of renewal planning, so that the warnings of far-sighted planners and social scientists seemed mere speculation. The lessons learned in Hyde Park-Kenwood and other clearance projects have made it perfectly clear that our greatest urban need is to solve the basic economic and social problems of the people condemned to live in slums. It is interesting that some of the very University officials who took a leading role in the renewal project are calling now for a direct attack on the poverty and deprivation, in their present neighborhoods, of those who were unwillingly relocated from Hyde Park-Kenwood.

* Lawrence Kimpton, who replaced Robert Hutchins as chancellor of the University in 1951, and who involved the school in this planning, wanted to improve its status in order to attract the children of the wealthy, rather than the budding but declassé intellectuals who had dominated the student body during the Hutchins era. Given this goal, the University's plan was perhaps more rational than I have suggested. Whether it was rational—or desirable—for the University to become just another training ground for the upper-middle class and to give up its distinctive role as one of the few excellent centers for the education of intellectuals is another question. As an alumnus of the University during the Hutchins administration, I do not think so.

A SOVIET AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PEOPLE AND LIFE 1891–1921. By ILYA EHRENBURG. Translated from the Russian by ANNA BOSTOCK and YVONNE KAPP. *Knopf. 434 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by THEODORE FRANKEL

REVOLUTIONS notoriously devour their makers. Generally their leaders are the dissident sons of the ruling establishment rather than members of the oppressed classes in whose name they struggle, and the awful logic of the revolution then dispatches them after their own defeated class into "the ash can of history," to use one of Trotsky's pet phrases.

No revolution followed this pattern more consistently than the Russian Communist uprising of 1917. Once in power, the proletarians turned with increasing brutality against the old revolutionaries, and particularly against those who had articulated the insurgent creed from their liberal middle-class ideology: the writers, artists, poets, and philosophers of Russia's disaffected bourgeois intelligentsia. One by one, they were cowed into silence, driven into exile or to early suicide, imprisoned or put into labor camps, killed—and defamed after death.

A handful survived; some by "inner emigration" into politically innocuous activities, others by adjusting to the new masters. Of the latter, the most important is Ilya Ehrenburg, best known in the West for his novel *The Thaw,* which gave its name to the short period of partial relaxation after Stalin's death. Having survived some very close calls, Ehrenburg last year reached his seventieth birthday and is now being lavishly honored. He has received the Order of Lenin, was recently hailed in *Pravda* as the "great" Soviet writer, and his biography-in-progress, "People, Years, Life"† has been appearing serially in the important literary magazine *Novy Mir.*

If Ehrenburg were a conformist pure and

† For this review, Mr. Frankel has based himself on the Russian text, and here translates the original title of the memoirs; also, all translations of excerpts are by him. Four parts of the memoirs have been serialized in *Novy Mir:* the first two have appeared in book form in Russia, and they are the two included in the Knopf volume. Knopf is planning future publication of the other two parts.—ED.

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simple, his autobiography could be expected to amount to little more than an apology for his own life. Being neither simple nor pure, Ehrenburg has tried for considerably more; he attempts not only to exonerate himself but also to rehabilitate his whole generation. Writing with guilt and affection, he is trying to set up a memorial to his dead fellow intellectuals—to make some amends by passing on their buried ideals and dreams to the sons of the victorious proletarians.

The proletarians of course are still very much in the saddle, and the task Ehrenburg has set himself takes a great deal of finessing, an accurate eye for how far one can go without getting one's head chopped off. A lifetime of maneuvering has made Ehrenburg a past master at this sort of thing. His stratagem is quite simple: he assumes the role of the detached bystander, the peripherally involved witness, and is thus in a position to report everything (well, not quite everything) without committing himself to anything. The virtue of this approach is that it keeps all lines of retreat open, its defect, that it never gets to the heart of events or, for that matter, to the heart of the writer.

Thus Ehrenburg finally remains a shadowy, two-dimensional figure. True, in the first three published volumes of the autobiography, he recounts the first forty years of his life at very considerable length: the idyllic middle-class Jewish childhood, his activities as a teen-age agitator, the poverty-stricken and exhilarating life as emigré poet in France from 1909 to 1917, his return to Russia and the role of Soviet bureaucrat, and a second period in Paris and Berlin in the 1920's and 1930's. But the wealth of surface detail does not quite conceal the lack of psychological depth, the rigid suppression of self-revelation. The events, public and private, that must have moved Ehrenburg most profoundly are either gingerly skirted or totally omitted.

This cautious method of his—and the fear behind it—are well exemplified by the understated explanation for his precipitate departure from Russia in 1921: "I had to convince myself that this was not just an ordinary revolt but the leap into the 20th century. . . . I was frightened by the thoughtless sacrifices, by the fierceness of the mob, and the simplification of the complex of world ideas. . . . Born yesterday, I loved yesterday's wisdom." Or, "I saw a progressive [i.e. Communist] society in which, for the sake of personal gain, friend betrayed friend, the wife deserted the husband, and the clever son blackened the name of his father." And he compresses years of Stalinist terror into the bare sentences, "Many times in life I felt like a hunted animal, listening to the steps coming up the stairs or going into the elevator. That was a very unpleasant feeling."

Even in personal matters he is oblique and evasive, in a most disturbing—or rather undisturbing—fashion. The birth of a daughter is mentioned in half a sentence, his marriage gets no more than a sentence. There is no mention of any relations with women and his friendships with men show a public face only.

Not all of this is a politically inspired reflex, of course. Part of it is doubtless a concession to the Russian prudery that has always remained untouched by our Western emphasis on knowing intimate details; and part of it may be a bow to the main Russian literary tradition which aims for the depiction of the social scene rather than for psychological analysis-in-depth. But the total effect is reinforcement of the discretion and evasiveness that have become second nature to Ehrenburg, whose hallmark is a literary style bland and detached, one forced to turn esoteric when it most wants to speak out. Of necessity Ehrenburg cultivates the light touch, hurries from topic to topic, and ends up with a collection of fragments. No intellectual development, no moral growth, is delineated. All that can be shown is indeed a disconnected series of "People, Years, Life"—as the self-conscious title proclaims.

YET, NOTWITHSTANDING these inhibitions, Ehrenburg accomplishes what he has set out to accomplish: the construction of a memorial to the ideals and friends of his youth. With infinite patience, sly cunning, and a coward's courage he piles up, fragment by fragment, anecdote by anecdote, quote by quote, the images and passions of the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia. He intimates, insinuates, drops hints, makes ironical asides, asks disingenuous questions, tells funny, self-deprecating stories—and at the end of a thousand trivia and indirections a vision has accumulated of a past which, by

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implication, is an indictment of the present and a muted call for a different future.

Ehrenburg's task is relatively easy so long as he sticks to his and his friends' dreaming and scheming abroad—subjects to which the present Soviet leadership is not unduly sensitive. Right now, when others have dared to remove Stalin's body from its mausoleum, it is probably not too awfully risky for Ehrenburg to describe pre-World War I Paris as a city with twenty newspapers of all political persuasions, with cabarets in which people sang satirical ditties deriding the President of the Republic and the Cabinet, where medical and physics students thought nothing of attending mass before going to classes, and where one could go around dressed as one liked, doing what one liked. But how strange, frightening, and desirable it all must sound to his young readers in Brest or Vladivostok.

And doesn't Ehrenburg go way out *pour épater le proletariat* when he flaunts his friendships with great innovators of Western culture, men like Picasso, Léger, and Modigliani, whose work is still vilified in Russia as degenerate and decadent bourgeois art? He tells, rather touchingly, of the first Picasso exhibit in Moscow, some time in the late 50's, when three thousand people crowded into the gallery, nearly causing a panic. "I said into the microphone, 'Comrades, you have waited for this twenty-five years, wait another twenty-five minutes.'... Somebody gave me a pair of scissors and it seemed to me that I was cutting not a ribbon but a curtain behind which Pablo stood."

And along with bringing to life by his anecdotes some of the artists of the West who till now have been abstract symbols of artistic corruption in the Soviet Union, he also tries to shed light on their concepts and theories—possibly for the first time in the experience of many of his readers. Using non-Marxist language, he explains Léger's mechanical people by the artist's belief that the modern sense of aesthetics is bound to the machine; supporting Modigliani's distortions, he remarks that a picture is not an anatomical atlas, and he recalls Picasso's explanation that Negro sculptors change the expected proportions of heads and bodies because they have a different concept of the proportions. About Picasso's "Guernica" he writes: "What is

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realism? Is the painter realistic who tries to portray the drama of Hiroshima by painstakingly painting the sores on the bodies of a dozen wounded? Doesn't reality demand a different, more generalized approach which reveals not an isolated episode but the essence of the tragedy?"

I have quoted Ehrenburg at some length in order to convey the note of defiance with which such things—the small change of introductory art classes in our colleges—have to be said in the Soviet Union. He goes even further: he takes the occasion to get off some caustic attacks on socialist realism and—more dangerous for him—party dictatorship over art. For the first, just two observations among many: "It seems to me that *kolkhozniki* drawn in the manner of the academic school cannot make anybody happy and that one cannot convey the rhythm of the second half of the 20th century by means of the flow of subordinate clauses used so felicitously by Leo Tolstoy"; and—outright heresy, this—"What counts in art is form not content." As to party control over the arts, he is more circumspect but still quite unequivocal. He complains about the monopoly of a single school of thought in the plastic arts and he quotes the former Commissar of Art, Lunacharsky, to the effect that "The Commissar must not influence art."

WHEN, HOWEVER, he brings his memoirs back from Parisian exile to the Soviet scene and Russian comrades we find him considerably more cautious; for despite the current regime's own slow and partial movements in the direction of rehabilitating some former martyrs, this is still exceedingly dangerous territory. To be sure, Ehrenburg stays away not only from his friends' political ideas but from their artistic programs as well: which is a great pity, for some of their unorthodox ideas, such as their protest against realistic allegory, have recently been taken up, tentatively and with hesitation, by the more courageous among the younger generation.

Instead, he limits himself here to the purely personal. He has a veritable obsession for names; he mentions a host of writers and artists, many of them completely obscure figures lost in the purges of the 20's and 30's: and he sets down their names with the intensity of an Orthodox Jew reciting the *kaddish*.

In many cases, Ehrenburg does go beyond the mere dropping of these names. He tells anecdotes, funny and sad stories, he quotes from their works, recalls snatches of conversation, and openly displays affection; in so doing, he tries to revive his dead friends, to restore their human quality—they who till now have remained insubstantial phantoms or odious references in the Soviet Encyclopedia—at least to younger Soviet readers.

Clearly his intent is more aggressive when he recalls men like Essenin and Meyerhold, and the rest of the Revolution's intellectual avant-garde who in the end became disillusioned with regime and party. They have been symbols of dangerous artistic tendencies and their works have remained unpublished for so long that even now, after their official rehabilitation, the very mention of their names in public seems like an act of breathless daring. And, in a sense, it is as daring as it seems, for to mention a Mayakovsky or a Meyerhold is to condemn, by implication, the mediocrities that have taken their places in the Soviet art world today.

Paradoxically, in attempting to humanize his old associates, he succeeds in diminishing them: he is, finally, afraid to discuss their ideas and artistic achievements, and thus is left with only the trivia of their personal histories. The falsification implicit in his method becomes very evident when he describes their deaths, which were almost invariably tragic; for he is forced to describe as individual misfortunes what were, in fact, inevitable consequences of a state-wide purge of all creative and independent spirits.

The cumulative effect of the "individual" tragedies is very depressing, especially in the case of the Jewish intelligentsia with whom Ehrenburg shared not only origins, upbringing, and the common attitudes of the outsider in society, but also the hardship of Russian anti-Semitism and repeated anti-Jewish purges by the Communist party apparatus. Men like Ossip Mandelstam and Isaac Babel, cut down by Stalin in their prime, are treated with an affection as pure and intense as anything to be found in these memoirs. What Ehrenburg loves and mourns in these men is the innocence and the child-like incorruptibility of ghetto idealists, destroyed by a revolution that turned out to be

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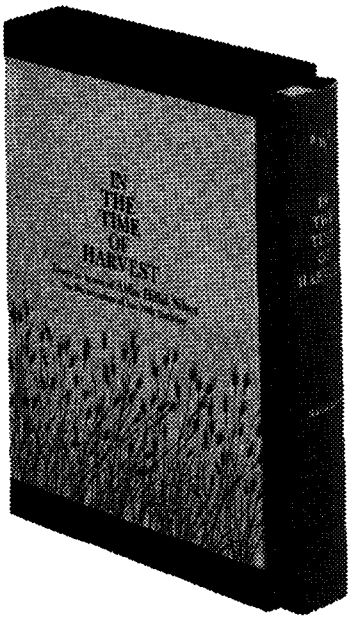

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hideously different from the messianic dreams of their youth. He calls Babel "my wise Rabbi, my teacher." He speaks of his "almost superstitious love" for a Yiddish poet; referring to Mandelstam's grim death, he exclaims in rare anguish, "Whom could such a poet hurt?" And the memory, unspoken but ever present, of the frantic propaganda services which he, Ehrenburg, rendered to the system and to the dictator who murdered his friends, puts a terrible load of guilt on these recollections.

Significantly enough, the one exception is Boris Pasternak. Ehrenburg praises him highly as a poet, but he maligns him as a man. What he acclaims in the others as other-worldliness and innocence, he condemns in Pasternak as egocentricity and self-exclusion from society; and he makes acid fun of Pasternak's naivety—a character trait he finds so lovable in Mandelstam.

More is involved here, it seems, than conformity to the official line, or professional jealousy, though both enter the picture. What sparks Ehrenburg's resentment is that Pasternak's course put his own into question. For both men tried to hand on the ideals of their youth to the next generation. Ehrenburg played it safe, compromised in order to survive and now justifies himself by telling part of the tale; whereas Pasternak refused to give in, kept his silence for decades, and finally, as it were with his last breath, told all without restraint. In doing so, he showed up not only the taint in Ehrenburg's ethics but also the limitation of Ehrenburg's tactic. For in the end, Pasternak accomplished fully and grandly what Ehrenburg is now trying to do cautiously and by half measures: Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago* is indeed the great memorial to Russia's lost intelligentsia, and for a short while it set Russia atremble with the echoes of the old ideas.

Yet, do we have the right to demand Pasternak's special kind of heroism from Ehrenburg? During the last congress of the Communist party, the memoirs here under review were attacked from the rostrum by Mr. Kutchetov, the editor of the influential literary monthly *October,* in this indirect but unmistakable fashion: "We still have with us writers of melancholy memoirs who, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, rummage around in the garbage pails of their unreliable memories in order to drag to the light of day some decomposed literary cadavers and show them off as living things."

Clearly, even in the comparatively relaxed climate of post-Stalinist Russia, it takes an unusual resilience and capacity for punishment to do what Ehrenburg is doing. For in trying to rehabilitate his own liberal, pre-revolutionary generation from official silence and defamation, he does more than write a testimony for the dead: he gives a message to the living. As I have said, the testimony is marred by evasion and omission, the message is heavily coded; it is there, nonetheless. We can only hope that the young people of Russia will not find it too hard to decipher.

Book Reviewers in this Issue

George Lichtheim's forthcoming book, *The New Europe,* will be published by Praeger next month.

Arthur Hertzberg is co-author of *The Outbursts That Await Us,* essays on religion and culture, soon to be published by Macmillan.

Robert L. Heilbroner, appearing for the first time in these pages, has written numerous books and articles on economics and other matters.

Herbert J. Gans is a sociologist whose book, *The Urban Villagers,* was just published by the Free Press.

Theodore Frankel, a frequent contributor, is at present living and teaching in Germany.

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